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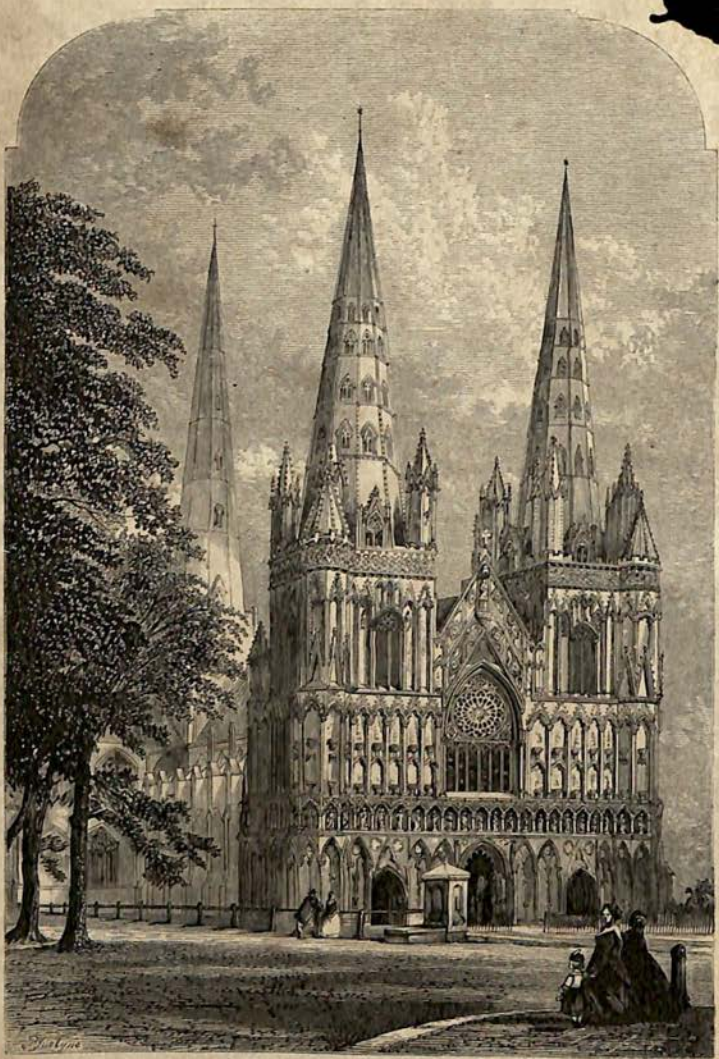
# *WALKS*

# IN THE BLACK COUNTRY

# AND ITS GREEN BORDER-LAND.



LICHFIELD CATHEDRAL.

# WALKS

IN

# *THE BLACK COUNTRY*

AND

# *ITS GREEN BORDER-LAND.*

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BY

ELIHU BURRITT, M.A.

LONDON:
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# *PREFACE.*

A FEW words may be expected from the author of this volume to explain the reasons of its appearance. A very few will suffice for this object. It is a part of the duty of American Consuls and Consular Agents abroad to prefix or append to their reports of the trade of their respective districts with the United States other facts bearing upon the productive capacities, industrial character, and natural resources of the communities embraced in their consulates. These annual reports are published by the Department of State at Washington, and constitute a volume of considerable value and interest. In preparing such a report for the Birmingham Consulate, including the Black Country, the author found that it would be impossible to give any approximate idea of the resources and industries of that remarkable district in the space of a few pages

appended to the statistics of its exportations to the United States. On closing his brief abstract at the end of 1866, he therefore proposed and promised to present to the Department at Washington, in the course of the ensuing year, a fuller account of the section included in his consulate. This volume, entitled "Walks in the Black Country and its Green Border-Land," is the fulfilment of that promise and undertaking. In order to make it more readable to those not immediately interested in the elements and industries of Manufactures, Trade, and Commerce, he has introduced somewhat lengthened and detailed notices of natural sceneries, public buildings and characters, and historical facts, incidents, and associations belonging to the section. With such abundant and varied material, several volumes of equal size might have been filled; but the author hopes this will serve to give distant readers a bird's-eye view of the district of which it treats, and, perhaps, present a few points and aspects of interest which some persons residing within it may have overlooked.

Birmingham, April 15, 1868.

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done. To be sure, the nuggets they have yielded to the pick have been black and rough, and blackened and rough men have sent them to the surface. And when they were landed by the noisy and uncouth machinery of the well and windlass, they made no sensation in the men who emptied the tubs, any more than if they were baskets of potatoes. But they yielded gold as bright and rich as ever was mined in Australia or California.

Nature did for the ironmasters of the Black Country all she could; indeed, everything except literally building the furnaces themselves. She brought together all that was needed to set and keep them in blast. The iron ore, coal, and lime—the very lining of the furnaces—were all deposited close at hand for the operation. Had either two of these elements been dissevered, as they are in some countries, the district would [illegible] lost much of its mineral wealth in its ut[illegible] It is not a figure of speech but a geolo[illegible] that in some, if not all, parts of this [illegible] region, the coal and lime are pack[illegible] in alternate layers in almost the ver[illegible] for the furnace requisite to give th[illegible] [illegible]lted iron. Thus Nature [illegible] requisite raw materials [illegible] ally mixed then[illegible] even supp[illegible]

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suggestions for going to work to coin these deposits into a currency better than gold alone to the country.

There are no statistics attainable to show the yearly produce of this section, or the wealth it has created. One would be inclined to believe, on seeing the black forest of chimneys smoking over large towns and villages as well as the flayed spaces between, that all the coal and iron mined in the district must be used in it. The furnaces, foundries, and manufactories seem almost countless; and the vastness and variety of their production infinite. Still, like an ever-flowing river, running through a sandy region that drinks in but part of its waters, there is a stream of raw mineral wealth flowing without bar or break through the absorbing district that produces it, and watering distant counties of England. By night and day, year in year out, century in and century out, runs that stream with unabated flow. The canals filled with water as black as the coal boats it floats, crossing each other here and there in the thick of the furnaces, twist out. Then lands in different directions, laden for distant cities and villages. The railways using the canals and their creeping pace, push off with vast loads to London and other centres of consumption. Tons upon tons of iron for distant manufactures go

from the district in the same way. And all the while, the furnaces roar and glow by night and day, and the great steam hammers thunder, and hammers from an ounce in weight to a ton, and every kind of machinery invented by man, are ringing, clicking, and whizzing as if tasked to intercept all this raw material of the mines and impress upon it all the labour and skill which human hands could give to it.

Within this *arrondissement* of the industries and ingenuities of nature and man, may be found in remarkable juxta-position the best that either has produced. Coal, iron, salt, lime, fire-brick, and pottery clay are the raw materials that Nature has put into the works as her share of the capital. And man has brought his best working science, skill, and labour to make the most and best of this capital. If the district could be gauged, like a hogshead of sugar, from east to west, or by some implement that would bring out and disclose to view a sample of each mile's production, the variety would be a marvel of ingenuity and labour. That is, if you gauged frame and all; for The Black Country is beautifully framed by a Green Border-Land; and that border is rich and redolent with two beautiful wealths—the sweet life of Nature's happiest springs and summers, and the hive and romance of England's happiest industries. Plant, in imagination, one foot of your compass

at the Town Hall in Birmingham, and with the other sweep a circle of twenty miles radius, and you will have "The Black Country," with all its industries, in a green velvet binding inwrought or tapestried with historical scenes and early playgrounds of brilliant imagination and poetical fiction. Just pass the gauging-rod of mechanical enterprise through the volume from Coventry to Kidderminster, and see what specimens of handicraft it will bring out and show, like a string of beads of infinite variety of tinting and texture. See what wares intervene between the two opposite extremities—between the ribbons of Coventry and the carpets of Kidderminster; or between the salt bars of Droitwich and the iron bars of Wolverhampton. Then let the history-miner run his rod through and see what gems he will bring out between Lichfield Cathedral and Baxter's Church at Kidderminster, or between Stratford-on-Avon and Kenilworth or Warwick Castle. Let him notice what manner of men have lived within this circuit, and what manner of mark their lives and thoughts made upon it and upon the wide circumference of the world. Then let him travel from rim to rim of the district, and study its physical conformation and its natural sceneries, and he will recognize their symmetry with the histories and industries with which it teems. Walking and looking in these different directions,

with an eye upon these different facts and features, I hope to see and note something which shall enable readers who are not familiarly acquainted with the district to get a better idea of its character than they had before acquired.

## CHAPTER II.

BIRMINGHAM: ITS NAME, POSITION, POLITICAL HISTORY, AND MEN.

BIRMINGHAM is the capital, manufacturing centre, and growth of the The Black Country. Every acre of the district has given it rootage and riches; and in every way it represents, measures, and honours the mineral and mental production of this velvet-bound area of fire and smoke. The antiquities of the town are rather dubious and obscure. Of course its physical site is as old as any part of the island. So much may be conceded to the zealous antiquarian who is eager to make the most of its history. Some have gone so far as to argue or believe that the lineage of its iron and copper workers runs back to Tubal Cain without a break, and that they here made and sharpened pickaxes and other tools for the Cornish tin-miners in the days of the Phœnician traders; that here also the scythes were made and bolted to the chariots

of the ancient Britons for cutting swaths through the Roman infantry. The data are rather thin and feeble for this theory; but there may be good basis of probability for it to rest upon. Whatever tools of labour or weapons of war were made of iron or copper by the ancient Britons they might as well have been made at Birmingham and vicinity as anywhere in the kingdom.

Those who affect this antiquity naturally ascribe its name to a Briton or Roman origin, but it is evidently made up of good, homely Saxon syllables, each with its rural and domestic meaning. Some one, it is said, has traced out over one hundred variations in the spelling of the name, but Hutton's idea is the most genial, *Broom-wych-ham*, or "Broom-village-home." To make Birmingham or Brummagem out of this pleasant Saxon appellation would be as natural and easy as half the transformations that mark the nomenclature of English towns. There is a beautiful volume of history and human character in that good old Teutonic word, *heim*, or *ham*. It never lost its charm or power by expansion of meaning and application. It kept both when it signified the residence of a large community as well as the birth-place or living-place of a single family. How many *heims* and *hams* the different families of the Teutonic race have planted in England and all over Germany and Scandinavia! No word in

all the classic languages of the old world ever had such living power as this Teutonic noun—*heim*, *ham*, or *home*. In all the history of the world not another such a word can be found that has moved the heart of so many millions. What a *heim* England has become to more millions than peopled the earth in Homer's day! Go to the furthest sheepcote in Australia, or woodcutter's cabin in Canada, and the youngest child of the family, that has read an English picture book, or has understood its father's stories about the land of his youth, will call England, *home*. Home-bound is a term first used when the whole English-speaking race in both hemispheres had but one centre, and but one home in sentiment. *Home-bound* meant then nothing more nor less than *England-bound*.

Birmingham, of course, is built on the same historical strata as all other large towns in England. As to the old British layer there is the usual thickness of variegated conjecture. Then succeeds the Roman, of which a few indices and relics have been discovered. With the Saxon period a little written history commences, and it is recorded that the township was given to a family named Ulwine, and afterwards Allen, but which, on taking possession of the property, affected the old Norman custom, and assumed the name of De Bermingham. It is quite probable that this Saxon family changed their name in this way at the conquest, in order to

keep their property by pretending a Norman descent or connexion. What it was in population or occupation up to the time of Henry VII the scant history of the period does not indicate. The first credible account of it is given by rare old Leland, who visited it in 1538. He says, "There be many smithes in the towne that used to make knives and all mannour of cuttinge tooles, and many lorimers that make bittes, and a great many naylors, &c." Thus it is quite probable that the leading manufactures of Birmingham have distinguished it for at least 300 years. In Leland's day it ranked among the small towns of the kingdom. It was then built chiefly on one street, only a quarter of a mile long, with one parish church and a market. And yet the old traveller seems to have been much impressed with the character and capacity of the town. Since his day, the one street "a quarter of a mile long," has threaded out into streets that count up an aggregate mileage of about 100 miles in length, while the number of dwelling houses increases at the rate of 4,000 per annum; and it is probable every month adds to the population a greater number of inhabitants than the town contained in 1538. Still, for a long time after Leland's visit, the very *locale* of the town was connected with others in the vicinity better known. The memories of two or three generations when linked together, can reach

the time when letters were directed to *Birmingham, near King's Norton,* or, "near Wednesbury." It must have been "The Black Country" that built Birmingham, and supplied it with the raw material of its manufactures 300 years ago; so that these wares indicate how far back this mineral district was worked for coal and iron.

Birmingham, in its mechanical industries and productions, has followed the fashions and customs of the world very closely, and supplied every art and occupation with all the working tools and appliances it needed. It has "worked to order" without asking questions for conscience sake in regard to the uses made of its articles of iron and brass. It has made all kinds of cheap and showy jewels for the noses and ears of African beaux and belles, and stouter bracelets of iron for the hands and feet of slaves driven in coffles to the sea-board. In the same shops and on the same benches, gilt and silver buckles were made by the million for the shoes of the nobility and gentry when Charles II came back to the throne and brought with him the court fashions and moralities of the continent. That was what archæologists would call the bronze period, when articles of brass slightly gilt or washed with silver were in high fashion in the upper ranks of society. Buckles and metal buttons then began to compete with iron wares in the business of the town; and from

that to the present day, the workers in brass have steadily increased, until they now number about 10,000 persons employed in that department. But the manufacture of firearms may be considered to have been the great distinctive industry of the town for more than 200 years. Up to the middle of the seventeenth century London monopolized the fabrication of these weapons of war, when it was transferred to Birmingham. Indeed, its skill and labour all the way back to the morning twilight of written history have wrought upon the scythes, sickles, and reaping hooks of war "for home and exportation." On the battle grounds of Hastings, Lewes, Evesham, Tewkesbury, and Flodden Field, hundreds of these tools bearing the Birmingham brand lay scattered about with hacked edges or broken points. Perhaps thousands of the tomahawks lifted by North American Indians against "the pale faces" of New England and Canada wore the same mark. And since firearms superseded these weapons of hand-to-hand fight, it is doubtful if a single battle has taken place in the civilized or uncivilized world in which muskets and rifles manufactured here have not played their part in the work of slaughter. Ill-natured persons of a suspicious turn of mind, might infer or expect that the people of Birmingham would delight in foul weather and ill winds to other communities, and would cry with Ephesian

zeal at the prospect of war—"Great is Mars!" Although it is true that they have "an anchor to the windward" in these storms that visit and desolate nations; although it is true that if these offences must come, they make a fortune if not a virtue out of necessity; still they have a larger pecuniary interest in Peace than many are disposed to believe. It is said, as one of the best axioms of wisdom and experience, that Peace has its victories as well as War: it also has its implements, tools, and tactics for the winning of its victories; and this, its implemental machinery, is almost infinite in extent and variety; and Birmingham must have £10 invested in its production where it has £1 in the direct service of war. Nor can it be said that, in their manufacture of these weapons of war, they have been indifferent to the cause in which they have been used at home or abroad; or that they have always supplied them to a friend or foe simply in reference to the best pay. In the struggle between Charles and the Parliament they sided with the people and furnished them with arms, which they refused to the King's forces either for love or money. Nor was this all: when Prince Rupert appeared before the town at the head of 2,000 men, the inhabitants encountered him boldly with their train-bands at Camp Hill, and fought against him with their own muskets, though they were worsted and the town punished for both its acts

of resistance, in refusing the arms to the royal cause, and in raising them against it. Birmingham, also, has had a little political revolution of its own, which produced a severe scrimmage between its domestic parliamentarians and royalists. At the time of the great upturning in France, "politics ran high," as they say, in England. It stirred the fountains of public sentiment to the very bottom, lees and all. Had not the drops of blood that dripped from the severed neck of Marie Antoinette drowned more than half the fire of English popular enthusiasm in behalf of the French revolutionists, Napoleon and Wellington might never have fought at Waterloo. Birmingham was just the town to be moved intensely by the great ground swell of the French revolution; but in this movement it was sharply divided against itself. Two years after the taking of the Bastile, the liberals of the town assembled at a dinner party to commemorate that event or what it signified. A counter demonstration was incited by this expression of sympathy with the French cause, and it seemed to have been intensified by a religious element. In the first place a wide and deep impression had been produced upon the public mind that no one could favour that cause without sympathizing with the utter atheism and infidelity of which the French revolutionists were accused. Then there was a bitter theological odium attaching to Dr. Priestley, who was not only the most distinguished

Unitarian minister at the time, but virtually the father and founder of the sect in England. Thus, strong and impulsive religious as well as political prejudices called together and inflamed a great mob, which first burst upon the house in which the liberals were assembled. The Unitarian chapel was next set on fire; then the residence of Dr. Priestley was burnt down, and all its contents consumed, including his valuable books and manuscripts, and all his chemical instruments and philosophical apparatus, by which he had attained the highest position and reputation as a man of science. The mob made an eager hunt after the doctor himself, and had he not escaped their hands, he would probably have fallen a victim to their fury. The mob, numbering from 8,000 to 10,000 men, really held possession of the town for two or three days, and burned several places of worship and many private residences; nor were they put down without bloodshed, by several regiments of cavalry that were summoned to subdue the reign of terror or of frenzy. The blinding fanaticism of religious bigotry, fanned to a flame among the ignorant but honest masses by the apostles of intolerance, produced this bloody and terrible riot.

But Birmingham, notwithstanding this outburst of popular violence, is distinguished above any other town in Christendom for organizing a political force, which had hitherto acted like the

lightning, the tornado, or earthquake, in sudden, wasting or wasteful explosions. Under the leadership or inspiration of Thomas Attwood public opinion won the greatest victory it had ever achieved without blood. Under him it was raised from an impulsive brute force to a moral power which the mightiest wrong could not resist. It was a perilous crisis for England. In almost every town or village there was the sharp crack of fiery sparks, showing how the very air the people breathed was charged with the electricity of their passionate sentiment. The approaching tempest gathered blackness, and its thunder-clouds revealed the bolts that were heating and hissing for their work of wrath and ruin. Very few thoughtful men of the nation can now doubt that the storm would have burst upon the country with all the desolation of civil war, if Thomas Attwood and the men of Birmingham had not drawn the lightning out of the impending tempest by the rod of moral force, which was grasped and wielded by his steady hand. From the central hill of the town he lifted up his revolutionary standard, with this new device: "PEACE, LAW, AND ORDER!" This white flag, and not the bloody banner of brute force and brute passion which had been raised in other times, at home and abroad, to right political wrongs, was the *drapeau* of the Political Union, which he formed and headed

in the metropolis of the Black Country. To this rallied men of all ranks and professions and occupations—members of Parliament, peers of the realm, clergy and ministers of all denominations, and the rank and file of the foundries, factories, and workshops of the district. The means were not only worthy the end but of equal worth in moral value. On that grand march to political right and power, the masses stood shoulder to shoulder with their leaders. It was a great copartnership and fraternization of the classes. They showed to European Christendom a spectacle it never saw or conceived before; what had never been seen or imagined in England before. That was a mighty mass meeting of the people, which could be counted by ten thousands, and nine in ten belonging to the working classes—a waving sea of faces, with 100,000 eager, listening eyes turned towards the speaker; gazing at principles and resolutions which no human voice could utter in the heaving of the vast multitude, but which were raised in great letters on standard boards, one to each half acre of men. That was about the grandest sight ever witnessed. It is computed that full 100,000 men—and three-fourths of them stalwart men of the hammer and pick, spade and file—were numbered in some of these outdoor meetings, who were swayed with indignant emotion, and listened with wrathful eyes and clenched

fists to the story of their political wrongs, till they looked like an army massed for battle. But the small hand of one of their fellow-townsmen waving above the surging host, with the other "grasping the banner of strange device"—"*Peace, Law, and Order*"—curbed and kept down the brute force of the mighty sentiment, and held the people back from violence. The white folds of that unstained flag, as it waved over Constitution Hill, seemed to shed outward on the breeze an influence that reached and moved and moulded the common mind of the nation. The motto and motive principles of the Birmingham banner of reform were not happy-worded theories which were easy to utter and as costless to practise. At that time the town numbered full 100,000 inhabitants, and no population of equal census in the kingdom was more intelligent and vigorous-minded. Their mechanical industries and occupations, involving and exercising so much science, thought, and skill, tended to quicken and expand the political conceptions and sensibilities of the artisans. No town in the realm could have felt more keenly the aggravated disparities to which it was subjected. Small villages, and even hamlets, in the south and west of England, had each its member of Parliament; and some of them two apiece. There were boroughs possessing thirty seats in the House of Commons whose

whole population put together did not equal that of Birmingham. And, what aggravated this disparity, many of these were "pocket boroughs," and the pockets that held them belonged to peers of the realm, who had and exercised the right to do what they would with their own. Thus, the House of Commons was at the risk if not in the condition of being a mere *apanage* to the House of Lords, and the creature and agent of its will and interest.

These were some of the political wrongs which Thomas Attwood and other orators of the Birmingham Political Union put in fervid and graphic exposition before the swaying, heaving masses of the town and district; thousands of them being the sons of the rioters of 1791, who burned out Priestley and mobbed the liberals for their sympathy with the French revolutionists. It is said that at some of these monster gatherings of strong-willed and strong-handed men, with fierce faces begrimed with the grease and coal-dust of their factories, forges, and mines, Attwood's face would pale at the thought of the deluge that would follow the outburst of all that brute power, should it break the holding of his hand and trample upon his banner of new device—"*Peace, Law, and Order.*" But it held them fast to the end. Even when the town elected two members and sent them to Parliament without a license from the

Government, and when both were thrown into prison for their presumption, and into a prison within a few hours march from Newhall Hill, the masses who felt it with indignant emotion moved not a foot beyond the shadow of their peaceful banner. If they had burst forth into violence under the pressure, and had been followed by thousands in other towns, the powerful and determined opponents of reform, who had all the military resources of the nation at their command, would have been able and willing to crush the movement by sword, bomb, and bayonet. But here was a force arrayed and engaged in close action, which neither Wellington nor Napoleon ever encountered on the field of battle. The Iron Duke could not withstand it nor delay its triumph. It carried the Reform Bill of 1832 against all the resistance that could be organized against it.

Thus, Birmingham was not merely the accidental scene of one of the greatest political events in English history. It organized the force that produced the event, that has governed the governments and guided the people of the kingdom from that day to this. It erected public opinion into a mighty power and enginery for the public good; a power ever ready to be worked against any evil that legislation could remove, or the enlightened mind and conscience of the people could abolish by moral action. It was

worked to a glorious victory against slavery in the British West Indies, and to an illustrious triumph at home against the Corn Laws. From the time, to use the old threadworn figure, that "victory perched upon the standard" of the Birmingham Political Union, "*Peace, Law, and Order*," no other flag has been reared, and no other force than it represented has been contemplated by any party or part of the English people with a view to political or social change. The ends for which the Political Union, the Anti-Slavery Society, and the Anti-Corn-Law League laboured, and the triumphs they won, were of immeasurable value in themselves; but the educational means they employed in enlightening the mind of the masses, in teaching them to think, reflect, compare, and observe for themselves, produced results of equal importance. Nor was this organization of the moral forces of a nation's mind limited in its benefits to England. Like the development and application of some new mechanical or natural force, it extended to other countries, where its operation is even more needed than it was in England. The Birmingham banner, "*Peace, Law, and Order*," as Lamartine said of the tricolour, will yet make the tour of the world, sweeping away with its white folds all the red flags of brute force, and rallying aggrieved populations to the platform instead of the barricade.

## CHAPTER III.

THE BIRMINGHAM MEN OF SCIENCE—INVENTORS—PIONEERS IN THE MECHANIC ARTS—BASKERVILLE, WATT, BOULTON, COX, ETC.

NOT only the moral and material worlds but their prime forces run parallel to each other. What the power of public opinion is in the one, the power of steam is in the other. We have noticed how public opinion was first "improved," applied and utilized in Birmingham. What it did to and through this force for the moral world, it did to and through steam for the world of matter and mechanics. James Watt came here with the alphabet and a few short syllables of the mighty science he founded. He came with a nervous, sensitive, impulsive mind, jaded with the long wrestle and grapple with conceptions half hidden and half revealed in various experiments of varying success. He had encountered much of that souring and fretting experience through which all the pioneers of invention have passed to their fame or failure. Like them he had

exhausted his means in the development of principles which he saw—what he could make few believe—would double the wealth of the world, and up to its last ages work for the well-being of mankind. He needed the copartnership of a man like Boulton, whose mind should supplement the qualities which his own lacked; a man of clear, collected, working sense, who could not only grasp intellectually all the principles and philosophy of Watt's dynamics, but could render the inventor just the assistance he needed to utilize them and bring them into the great work which they are now performing for the world. His faith in their immense faculties was steady, genuine, and strong; and it held up that of Watt, and cheered and strengthened him in the hours of depression. Then he had the means as well as the mind to work up the new force to its great capacities. It is said that he expended nearly £50,000 in experiments on the steam engine before Watt had so perfected it as to yield any return of profit. Had not Watt found such a partner, the world might have lost the use and value of steam power for half a century. And who can estimate what it has done for the world in the last fifty years, on land or sea? What would England have been to-day without it? What would the flat lands of tidemills and windmills have been without it? Several minds of vivid speculation have essayed to give some

approximate estimates or conceptions of the value of this motive power to various countries; some have measured it against the small standards of horse-power and man-power; but it is almost like gauging infinity with a yard-stick, to attempt to measure and value the new capacities which this force has given to mankind. What Stratford-upon-Avon was to Shakespeare, Birmingham should be to Watt. He was not born here, nor was he schooled here in the first rudiments of his science; but here he launched his great invention; here he brought out in one grand result the value and vitality of all his early conceptions and experiments in Scotland. At Soho, but a little way from Newhall Hill, where the parallel force of public opinion was organized a motive power in the moral world, steam force was first made a perfected working-power for the material and mechanical world.

But Birmingham has given to the world another working-power, a fitting and natural complement to the two great forces we have noticed; as natural and complemental as light is to the heat of the sun. Watt and Boulton, having developed steam at Soho into a working-force for its thousand uses, now educed a light to lighten the towns and villages which that force should build and fill with mechanical industries. At Soho they elaborated and gave to the world gas-power; for it really belongs to

one of the utilitarian forces that are now working for human comfort and progress. There was a happy coincidence in the advent of this new illumination. Not only was it a mechanical or material but a moral coincidence of pleasant augury. It was natural that such men as Watt and Boulton should find in a lump of coal the two great properties of the sun—heat for steam and light for illumination; but it was a coincidence full of moral beauty, that they first set that light aglow in their Soho Works to celebrate the conclusion of peace between England and France in 1802. The association may have been entirely accidental, but it is no less interesting for that circumstance: the enlightenment of the public mind and the illumination of the dwellings and cities of the people emanated, in natural succession, from Birmingham, the one under Attwood, the other under Watt.

But there is still another coincidence worthy of note and admiration in the productive history of Birmingham. In speaking of the invaluable agencies which Watt and Boulton brought into operation, and especially of the new light they elaborated for the great cities and private dwellings of the people, a predecessor in a collateral and co-working science of illumination should have had a prior notice. This was John Baskerville, who was to the printing-press what Watt was to the steam-engine. Indeed, from Caxton's day to

this, England has not produced such another hero of typography. Considering his brave and unwavering patience, and his life-long, self-sacrificing efforts in raising the art to its highest perfection, he well deserves an appellation too exclusively monopolized by military careers. Not ten in ten thousand of educated men, who read and admire the most beautifully-printed books of the present day have the slightest idea how much the art that so delights them is indebted to the genius and indomitable and ill-requited perseverance of John Baskerville. But the public debt to him was better known and appreciated by illustrious contemporaries in different countries; and by none more fully and admiringly than by an American printer named Benjamin Franklin. He was born at Wolverley, in Worcestershire, in 1706, the same year in which Franklin was born in Boston, Massachusetts; and up to a certain stage in their experience it ran somewhat in the same vicissitous pathway of life and labour. Young John was apprenticed to a stonecutter, and young Benjamin began his useful life by cutting candle-wicks for his father, a soap-boiler and tallow-chandler. Neither followed his original occupation long. John seems to have acquired great taste and skill for caligraphy while a stonecutter's apprentice. Doubtless he was employed on monumental literature written with his chisel on grave-stones, which

afforded his genius a fine scope in forming letters of every form and size on the great white sheets of marble. At any rate, he is soon found in Birmingham teaching as a writing-master the art he had acquired. It was probably just about the same time that the boy Ben. Franklin left off cutting candle-wicks for his father, and became an apprentice to his elder brother in Boston as a type-setter. Baskerville was not contented to confine his time and talent to the instruction of boys in writing. By dint of practising in scroll works and in the diversified emblems and imagery of monumental carving, he had acquired a taste and genius for more ambitious designs for ornamentation. The canvas on which he exhibited them for public use and admiration was *papier-maché* trays. If he did not invent this material, he became to it what Wedgwood was to the ware that bears his name. He accumulated a large fortune by the manufacture of these novel and beautiful articles; built a mansion, and settled down to the enjoyment of literature and the fine arts with a relish which his pursuits had stimulated and fostered. But his ambition and genius for the formation of beautiful letters, which his early lessons on momumental marble had developed, now took wider scope and higher flight. The celebrated letter-founder, William Caslon, had won a world-wide reputation for the beautiful type he produced at his foundry

in Finsbury, and Baskerville, who admired his genius as well as coveted his fame, determined to enter the lists with him as a competitor. To this end he went to work with extraordinary energy and enthusiasm. He spared no money or labour in bringing the art to its highest perfection. As Boulton expended £50,000 on Watt's steam-engine before it was fully developed, so Baskerville, it is said, expended £600 before he produced a letter to satisfy himself. His success brought him fame but not fortune. He printed various works, which, however, did not repay him the amount he had expended on the art. Like other inventors and public benefactors he incurred many losses and disappointments, which the enviable reputation he acquired probably made him feel all the more keenly. He expresses this feeling in a letter to Horace Walpole, in which he said he was heartily tired of the business of printing, and wished to retire from it. The masterpiece of his typography was what was called "The Baskerville Bible," a few copies of which are still extant. It is a noble specimen of type and printing, showing to what perfection he raised the art in his day. But he seems to have been better pleased with the estimation in which the type and paper of his Bible were held than with the acceptance and practice of the holy principles of the volume by those who professed to preach and live them.

Indeed the moralities even of professedly religious men were at a low ebb at the time, and his spirit seems to have taken a bitter vein at their practices. He converted an old windmill standing in his grounds into a momument for himself, surmounting it with an urn bearing this inscription: "Stranger! beneath this stone, in unconsecrated ground, a friend to the liberties of mankind directed his body to be inurned. May the example contribute to emancipate thy mind from the fears of superstition and the wicked arts of priestcraft." Whether this epitaph drew upon him the fury of the mob that set upon Priestley, or whether the illumination emanating from his printing press had been too bright for the eyes of bigots jealous of popular blindness, his monument was destroyed and not a stone was left to indicate where his ashes lay. About thirty years after this work of fury and destruction, his body was discovered accidentally by some workmen employed in constructing the canal that runs through the grounds belonging to his estate. It was found in excellent preservation, and now lies in a catacomb under Christ Church. After his death his widow endeavoured to dispose of his splendid founts of type, but found no purchaser in England ready to buy them, notwithstanding they had become so famous for their elegance. Finally they went into the hands of a literary association in Paris for £3,700, who pur-

chased them for the object of bringing out a magnificent edition of Voltaire's works under the editorship of Beaumarchais, the French clock-maker's son who came to such celebrity as a musician, humourist, and writer, especially as the author of the "Barber of Seville." The versatility of these three apprentices to mechanical trades—Benjamin Franklin, John Baskerville, and Peter Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais—and the simultaneous attraction of their genius to the art and power of the Press, are interesting coincidences, and all the more so in their being aware of it at the time, though belonging to different countries. Indeed, Franklin was one of the circle of friends and correspondents whom Baskerville drew around him. One can hardly refrain from a feeling of regret, however, that no printer in his own country had the mind and means to purchase the beautiful types on which he had expended so many years and such a fortune in elaborating. And this regret may well be deepened by the circumstance that the same type that produced "The Baskerville Bible" should next be employed to give additional attraction to the works of Voltaire.

Five years after the death of Baskerville, in 1775, a man of still greater celebrity as a luminary of science and philosophy, took up his residence in Birmingham, and soon made a great reputation and a great movement in philosophical and

theological circles. Although he may be regarded as holding out too many different lights at the same time, few will be disposed to dispute his rank as an illuminator of the public mind, and as such to be classed with the men who have made their mark upon the world from Birmingham as their standpoint. This was Joseph Priestley, who was born near Leeds in 1733, and who worked his way up through various occupations and professions to great eminence in several departments of science, philosophy, and literature. In America his name is principally, or popularly, associated with Unitarianism, as its practical founder in England. His writings or his reputation as an advocate and expounder of that system of religious faith have created this impression, while what he was else is not so well known to the reading public. But in the midst of his theological controversies, he pursued his philosophical investigations with great depth of research; and the theories he developed, even if erroneous or incapable of being worked to practical and utilitarian results, were useful to those more successful in applying science to the every-day necessities and purposes of common life. His works in this department were varied and valuable, and entitled and admitted him to the front rank of the savans of the day. They were especially esteemed in France, and they brought him into

intimate correspondence with the most illustrious scholars of that and other countries. It may serve to denote the versatility of his genius, and the varied fields of learning he explored, to give the titles of some of his works: "Charts of History and Biography;" "History of Electricity;" "Discoveries relating to Vision, Light, and Colours;" "Lectures on the Theory and History of Language;" "Principles of Oratory and Criticism." Here were fields enough, one might have thought, to engage and satisfy all the speculations and capacities of the most active mind. But they were all too narrow for Priestley, or were occupied by him merely as the side-grounds of mental recreation wherein his intellectual powers were recruited for the more arduous campaigns of theological and political controversy. His religious and political opinions brought down upon him the fury of the mob's fanaticism in 1781, which all his learning as a philosopher could not avert. His house was burnt, and with it—what was worth the value of a whole town of mere brick and mortar—his library, his philosophical apparatus, and manuscripts, including his correspondence with the most illustrious men in the world of science. He retired to London from Birmingham, where he received addresses of sympathy and admiration from different parts of his own country and also from France. But these rather fanned

the flame of prejudice against him in the opponents of his religious and political opinions, and its steady burning finally drove him to America, where he settled down, and died in a retired town in Pennsylvania at the age of eighty years. The celebrated Cuvier pronounced an eulogy upon him after his death before the National Institute of France.

## CHAPTER IV.

BIRMINGHAM REFORMERS AND ARTISTS—ROWLAND HILL AND THE PENNY POST—DAVID COX AND HIS PAINTINGS.

WE now come to a Birmingham reformer who may well be called the great Political Economist of Human Nature. Rowland Hill virtually commenced life in Birmingham, and here not only taught mathematics in his father's school, but learnt to apply them to a system which has brought more comfort and happiness than arithmetic can measure, not only to all the millions of the British empire, but to all the divided families of the civilized world. It is not in arithmetic, nor rhetoric, nor poetry, nor prose to give a complete idea of the benefits The Penny Post of England has conferred upon all classes of the people. Owing to the circumscribed area of "the three kingdoms," this postal system works more nearly like one of the great and beautiful agencies of Nature than anything else a human government ever put its hand to. Indeed, it works

like the dew and with the dew. The distillery of the still skies above, and the distillery of the Penny Post beneath work hand in hand through the quiet hours of the night; one dropping out of the starlit atmosphere gentle dews, the other dropping for the sleeping families of the land the welcome thoughts of wakeful memory—thoughts that are to ten thousand breakfast circles in the morning what the dews are to ten thousand fields listening in thirsty silence for their fall. If London were the local centre, every family in England would be within a night's gallop of the iron horse with the London mail-bag strapped to his back; so that at the usual breakfast hour the postman might drop in a letter to season the morning meal in the most distant home in the realm. No citizen of a foreign country sojourning in England can fail to admire the quiet and beautiful working of this postal system. And thousands of foreigners have admired it to a practical effect. They have carried back to their own countries descriptions and impressions of its dispensation which have moved their governments to adopt the same system at different degrees of approximation. Cheap postage is the order of the day everywhere. Even the countries lying beyond the boundary line of Christian civilization are copying slowly the example of England; and the day may yet come, after the nations have saved some of the millions

of gold now lavished on war, when the Penny Post shall reach out from London, Paris, and New York, until it touches the circumference of the globe and every point on the radii within its sweep. When that happy day shall come—when the interchange of thought and the commerce of affection, as well as the correspondence of the materialistic interests which the postal system of England has provided for her population, shall be extended to all the nations and peoples of the world, then will they know and recognize with admiration and gratitude what they owe to Rowland Hill. Indeed, every penny postage stamp put upon a letter the world around and the world through, if it does not bear his image and superscription, will bear his memory and its worth to mankind.

As no history is so liable to be lost sight of and unappreciated as that of the lives of living men, a few facts connected with the life and labours of this benefactor of his country and his race may be properly stated here. Whatever he put his hands to, he did with all his mind and strength, often forgetful of the capacities of both in his assiduous application. He gave the same unwearied but wearying attention to his profession as a teacher of mathematics, and as an organizer of system in his father's academy, that he gave to the development and prosecution of that great reform with which his name will ever be con-

nected. His delicate health gave way under the strain of these duties, and he was obliged to retire from them in 1833. But he only changed the scene and subject of his occupation; for he was soon appointed Secretary to the South Australian Commission. In 1837 he broke ground in the great and crowning work of his life, and brought out several pamphlets on his proposed reform in the postal system of Great Britain. The chief and most effective of these *brochures* was one entitled "State and Prospects of Penny Postage." In this he developed the great principle which has already won such a triumph in different countries besides England. That is, *uniformity* of charge; or taxing *weight* and untaxing *distance*, so that the Post Office Department should no longer "levy black mail" on remote provincial towns, to punish them for their distance from London. At that time England had more *distance* rates, if possible, than we had in America. The lines were drawn as sharply and severely as with us. And every line was a postal frontier over which a busy and ingenious smuggling business was carried on daily, but by night more especially. When a man's house was cut through in the middle by such a line, and his parlour was on the shilling and his kitchen on the sixpenny side, of course he would post his letters from the kitchen door. Then the Post Office lost as much through the *franking* privilege

as through this smuggling. All the Members of Parliament of both houses, besides other officials, were possessed of this privilege, and they turned it to business and personal uses of wonderful variety and extent. In the first place, the Peers and Commons count up about 1,300 members between them, or more than four times the number of the Representatives and Senators at Washington. There are more stories told than printed of the manner and extent of their use of the franking privilege. Not that they perverted and abused it more shamefully than did the American Members of Congress, but that, outnumbering our legislators by four to one, they loaded the mail-bags with four times the number of "dead-heads," or free letters that the American Post Office had to bear and charge upon honest, paid correspondence. It would be unparliamentary and uncharitable to suspect or listen to the suspicion that any M.P. ever sold any stock in his franking privilege or ever yielded to the temptation of realizing an "honest penny" out of it directly in the way of trade, but it is said to be a fact that many great business firms in the large cities found it would pay to expend large sums in returning a senior partner to Parliament, not so much in reference to the general interests of the country as to the cheapening of their commercial correspondence. Frequently larger constituencies than a single

mercantile firm would have an eye to the same postal facilities; so that the *frank* of their member acted like a diffusive bribe over Whig and Tory of the borough that elected him.

Thus Rowland Hill, in agitating for a uniform Penny Postage, not only had all the organized red-tapeism and *vis inertiæ* of an old and vicious system to encounter, but also a thickset and a stoutset array of vested interests to grapple with and overcome. Still, such was the force of the facts and arguments he brought forward, and such was the general interest of the great masses in his scheme, that the very year in which it was thus developed a Parliamentary committee was appointed to examine it. This committee fully appreciated its merits, and strongly recommended its adoption, not only for the great stimulus and facility it would give to mercantile correspondence, but also for its educational effect upon the lower classes in developing and exercising their intellectual faculties and social affections and intercourse. During the following session more than *ten thousand* petitions were presented to Parliament praying for an uniform penny postage. And the next year this great reform was realized, and *Penny Postage* became a power in the land and one of the great social forces of the world. Although so many and strong prescriptive interests, and so many hereditary and ancient

customs and habits were arrayed against it, they yielded to its own inherent truth, right, and reason. In fact, no other reform so radical and sweeping was ever carried through all the stages of its progress to its full consummation in such a brief space of time. But although his system was adopted by Parliament, and himself appointed to supervise and direct its operation, and although virtually the whole nation favoured his plans, he had to encounter in red-tape officials that heavy, deadening, back-water resistance which clogs the strongest wheels of motion. He retired wearied but not defeated in 1843; but the great masses of the people did not allow him to retire from their grateful memory, and in 1846 he received a testimonial of their appreciation in the sum of £1300, collected from the millions virtually in his own coin, The Powerful Penny. No example in history can be found more conclusive and striking than this to illustrate and prove the policy of cheapening an article in order to extend its use. In 1837 the number of letters that passed through the Post Office was 75,000,000; in 1842 it was 360,000,000, from which time it has steadily increased by nearly the same ratio of progression. Mr. Hill was reinstated as Secretary of the Post Office in 1847, and for fifteen years laboured to perfect and extend the system he had originated, not only between England and all her colonies but

all foreign nations. He was always ahead of the Government and a majority of the people in his views on this free trade of human minds, and I fully believe that he was personally in favour of establishing that Universal Ocean Penny Postage which was agitated so earnestly some twenty years ago in England. Although the reduction of ocean postage did not reach the uniform and universal penny rate, it was greatly modified under his regime, so that a single letter from London to Paris is now charged only *4d.*, against *1s. 2d.*; while the postage to Australia, India, Canada, and all the British colonies has been reduced to *6d.* for the three services, the home inland, the sea transport, and the colonial inland. This is just half way to an Ocean Penny Postage, which would make the whole charge between England and all other countries *3d.* on a single letter. It was hoped that Rowland Hill would retain his post in the General Post Office until he should see the system so intimately associated to his name carried out to this extent and universality; but he may well rest and be thankful for having seen his plans worked to such magnificent results.

M. D. Hill, Esq., late Recorder of Birmingham, and elder brother of Sir Rowland Hill, applied his great legal abilities and philanthropic mind to a reform of vast importance—the improvement of prison discipline and of the whole criminal juris-

prudence of the country. The statistics he collected, and arguments and views he pressed upon the public mind as well as upon the Government, are a most valuable contribution to a movement now progressing in different countries for the better treatment of their actual and prospective criminals. Several other brothers have also distinguished themselves, some in the profession of their father, as conductors of high class schools for the education of gentlemen's sons, whilst others have been able assistants in the General Post Office in working out the postal system of Sir Rowland.

Although it redounds less to the credit of a town merely to give birth to great men than to make great men born elsewhere, still those born and raised to eminence in Birmingham present a goodly roll. We have noticed what one of these has done for his country and the world in the boon and blessing of free trade between heart and heart, mind and mind, through the Penny Post. We have called him the Political Economist of Human Nature. We now come to one of the great poets of that nature that surrounds, embosoms, sustains, and delights the human, and is to universal humanity what the physical being of man is to his mind. Such a poet was born in Birmingham, and his name was David Cox He looked with the loving rapture of a poet's eye into the face of Nature, and then he dipped his pencil

in the rainbow, and caught and fixed on canvas her sunniest gleams; and they would look so to the life, that a harvest field, flushed with the golden glory of the setting sun, seemed a living smile of her joy at the beauty of her own fair world. David Cox was born in Birmingham in 1793, and died here in 1859. He sleeps under Nature's graceful monuments in Harborne churchyard—the outspreading trees, that stretch forth their long arms and wave them to and fro over his quiet grave, and with the murmur of all their green leaves, now moved to mournful music by the soughs and sighs of the evening's breath, now touched with the thrill of the bell's voices in the old church tower, whisper their requiems over his last resting-place. He was one of the fathers of the water-colour school of art, and for many years his genius enriched and beautified the gallery of the Society in London with paintings that commanded universal admiration. Although the portraiture of Nature's face is different from the portraiture of human faces in this respect, that it changes little from year to year and century to century, whereas the human countenance is soon changed and soon disappears, never to be reproduced, still it is a delight to see the features that a landscape, we know well, presented to the artist half a century ago; to see one of Nature's sweetest smiles fifty years old still gleaming to the life on

canvas, as fresh as if it were mirrored in this very morning's dew; it is pleasant to see the wheatfield reaped in our childhood with half its golden grain waving before the bent reapers, and happy children among the sheaves behind, and happy birds on wing above, and all the scenery of the harvest, all but the voices of the men and birds, alive again as they lived on the extremest verge of our quickened memory. David Cox made truth poetical in the portraits of these rural sceneries of the seasons and of the rich and picturesque suburban farms, dells, and lanes of Harborne and other Birmingham vicinities. It was this truthfulness in poetry that distinguishes his best pieces, which none appreciated more highly than his nearest neighbours. Indeed, he was their Turner, and in many of their houses his local landscapes are valued as the works of one of the most eminent artists of the country. He was also the founder of a local school of artists, and had pupils among his neighbours. One of these a merchant, of assiduous business life up to eighty years of age, found time to cultivate and exercise a genius developed under the instruction of the great painter, and he made it a dying request to be buried as near as possible to his master: and their graves lie side by side under the shade of the same tree. Another pupil, resident at Harborne, Mr. Charles Burt, has attained to an eminence as an artist almost equal to that of Cox himself.

## CHAPTER V.

DISTINGUISHED MEN OF CHRISTIAN FAITH AND PHILANTHROPY—JOSEPH STURGE AND REV. JOHN ANGELL JAMES.

FOLLOWING the order of these concentric circles of arts and influences, we now come to that of Christian philanthropy. And no town in England has produced a more perfect example of this great grace than Birmingham.

Joseph Sturge, take him all in all, did not have, and did not leave his like in England, or in any other country or age. That is my own personal impression; and I knew him intimately during the golden autumn of his great and good life. Many and illustrious have been the philanthropists who have blest the centuries with their thoughts and works of benevolence. Nothing gives more striking proof of the breathing of a divine spirit upon human hearts than the production of such men and women. Now there are several different forms and forces even of genuine, Christian philanthropy. For there is often a form without a

working force; and a form, too, that is not to be condemned or turned out of the fellowship of useful and pleasant charities. There is a general, even, diffusive goodwill to men that spreads itself out like a wide and sunny smile of good-nature. It is light, but not heat; still light is good for the eye, and the genial light of such inactive benevolence, if it does not actually produce the working charities, is grateful to society, and is far more useful even than ornamental. Then there is what may be called eccentric philanthropy, or a benevolence with a comet's orbit, narrow in the centre, but running to an extreme length and a sharp point in some special direction. These eccentric philanthropists have been most valuable and illustrious workers for human good. Their deeds and dispositions have brightened the pages of history with the beautiful sunshine of benevolence. They are the men and women who fix the eye and heart intently upon some particular form of moral evil or physical suffering, and sight and feeling grow more and more intense as they look and think upon the subject of their concentrated efforts. For a time, it may be, each has his own field all to himself, and it is large and the work is arduous, and he cannot even look over into another, much less lend a hand to the labour that other field demands. Such a philanthropist was John Howard. He was a man of

great benevolence to his kind, but it ran virtually all in one direction and was concentrated upon one great evil—the terrible condition of prisons in his own and other countries. This great field of perilous labour was enough—and more than enough—for every thought and every effort he gave to the public good. No one could be so ungrateful to his memory as to inquire whether he ever said or wrote a word against war, slavery, or intemperance. Elizabeth Fry had her especial field, like Howard, and her large benevolence was concentrated in like manner upon it.

But this was the distinguishing characteristic of Good Joseph Sturge: his philanthropy was as spherical as the sun itself, and the space it illuminated and warmed was as spherical as the sun's light on the face of the earth. His heart was so full of love to God and man that it shone out of him equidistantly in every direction. Indeed it seemed a star set alight in the firmament of human society, with beams as warm as the sun's. And well they might be, for they were the sun's, and lost but little light or heat in the reflection, he lived so near to it. What John Howard was to the prisons of Europe Joseph Sturge was to the house of African bondage. What John Howard felt and did for white men and women in the misery of their horrible cells, Joseph Sturge felt and did for the myriads of negro slaves scourged

to their unrequited toil under British or American masters. No man in England ever gave more thought and effort to their emancipation and enlightenment than he did. But all he felt and worked for them did not affect the rotundity of his philanthropy; indeed it seemed to perfect as well as expand its sphere; and in that sphere he laboured so steadily and evenly, that now he is gone, one can hardly say for what enterprise of benevolence he was most distinguished. If he had not wrought in so many different fields, he might have been called the John Howard of the anti-slavery cause. But the cause of universal peace and brotherhood of the peoples was equally dear to his great heart, and no man living or dead ever gave to that cause a warmer sympathy, a greater hope, a larger or steadier faith, or a more generous and munificent hand. No one knows this by more personal and intimate evidence than myself. His heart was shining at its full with the same sunlight when journeying by night through Russian snows to St. Petersburgh to say an earnest word for peace to Nicholas, as when he walked among the negro cabins in the torrid zone to gather evidence of their condition for the British Parliament. It was the same light that beamed like the smile of GOD on his broad serene face as he walked from cottage to cottage in the desolated hamlets of Finland after the Crimean

war, pouring the oil and wine of his Christian sympathy into wounds still bleeding from the rough hands of his countrymen; making the hearts of houseless widows sing for joy at the gifts he brought in his hands and the gracious words he spoke to them out of his eyes for lack of other speech they could understand.

And yet, after all that he felt and did for Freedom and Peace and the brotherhood of nations, the cause of Temperance seemed equally dear to him, and he gave to it an advocacy as earnest and unwearied up to his last day on earth. In the great Anti-Corn-Law movement he was a tower of strength. Not that he made eloquent speeches from the platform, or powerful arguments in the press for the repeal of taxes on the people's bread. His strength did not lie in these intellectual forces; but in the irresistible and all-conquering power of a great principle. Never was a man more distrustful of expediency, of compromise with wrong, of a sliding-scale of obedience to the true and right. If he had seen in his youth what Constantine saw written in letters of fire on a cross planted on the clouds, "Εν τουτο νικω," *In this conquer*, he could not have taken hold of a whole principle and carried it into the breach with more unswerving faith and courage. "Total and immediate" was the flag he raised against every great wrong which he attacked. It was this he reared

against that mongrel compromise with slavery, the apprentice system in the West Indies; and he would fight under no other against the Corn Laws. He not only carried it into that great field as the banner of his own action, but he rallied to it even many of the leaders of the movement who were on the point of being seduced into a compromise with the upholders of the unjust system. At this crisis of the movement, its most dangerous stage, when the two great political parties were so nearly balanced that each was bidding high for the adhesion of the Anti-Corn-Law League, no man saw the peril of the temptation so clearly as Joseph Sturge. He was on the point of leaving for America on an anti-slavery mission; but he wrote an earnest letter to the Council of the League, offering to raise his subscription from £100 to £200 for the year, on the distinct understanding that they were on no account to yield up the principle of total and immediate abolition. Mr. Cobden, who had the greatest reverence for his strong, deep, and clear sense of truth, right, and duty, wrote to him thus: "A letter from you in the 'Anti-Corn-Law Circular,' published at the present time, exhorting us to stand firm to principles, and promising your co-operation so long as we do so, would be a rallying point for all the good and true men, and would shame the wanderers and bring them back to our ranks."

No truer friend of the great masses of the people ever lived in England. To all that made for their well-being he gave an earnest sympathy and unwearied effort, and he gave both without the alloy or imputation of a selfish sentiment or object. No man could have had a stronger distaste for the tactics of partisan warfare or for the excitement of parliamentary life, and nothing but a deep and honest sense of the political rights of the unenfranchised people could have constrained him to offer himself as a candidate for a seat in the House of Commons. Although he was defeated at the polls by small majorities, the moral influence of the principles and sentiments he put forth in his addresses and speeches was worth more to the great cause of the people than half-a-dozen seats in Parliament filled by the lukewarm *doctrinaires* of political expediency.

No class of the wronged or needy so took hold of his large and feeling heart as the little vagrant, ignorant children—some of them worse than fatherless—who seemed to be set on the steepest and slipperiest declivities of temptation, to slide into the depths of vicious life and misery. I was with him when he visited the *Rauhe Haus*, near Hamburgh, and witnessed the deep interest with which he studied the character and working of that admirable institution for the rescue and education of juvenile vagrants. Immediately on

his return to England he set to work to found a similar establishment, and the Reformatory Home, as it may justly be called, at Stoke Prior, near Bromsgrove, where about sixty young outcasts are clothed, fed, and educated, is one of the last works of his benevolent life.

On the spring morning of the 14th of May, 1859, that purified and waiting spirit heard the whisper among the flowers of its earthly home, "Come up higher!" and serene at the sudden call, it went up higher to join the holy fellowships for which it had been fitted, and which might well be the happier for its presence and communion.

Although the people of Birmingham knew and revered the manner of man they had in Joseph Sturge, they knew not the depth of that sentiment of reverence and esteem they had entertained for him until the sudden news ran through the streets and lanes and into the humblest cottages and garrets of the poor, "*Joseph Sturge is dead!!*" Never since the town had a being and a name had a death so moved the population. It seemed to touch all classes and political parties with the same sympathy and sorrow. The press, the pulpits of all denominations, and public men testified to this sentiment. As the Rev. John Angell James said in his sermon: "The lengthened cortége, the closed shops, the crowded streets, the long procession of respectable men, the mixture of ministers

and members of all religious denominations, the seriousness and sorrow that sat on every countenance, which in mournful silence seemed to say, 'We have lost a benefactor'—the numerous sermons which from the pulpits of various denominations paid a tribute to his memory, all proclaimed the respect in which he was held, and which was in fact a public honour put not only upon the benefactor, but upon philanthropy itself." Speaking of the funeral, his biographer justly remarks: "It was indeed an instructive spectacle which Birmingham presented that day, when the whole town, the seat of the largest manufacture of small fire-arms in the world, bowed in reverence over the bier of Joseph Sturge, the man of peace. It was a tribute paid, not to rank, or station, or eloquence, for he had none of these, but to virtue alone."

Although monuments of brass or marble are not needed to perpetuate the memory of such a man as Joseph Sturge, they are useful to show to subsequent generations how he was regarded by the men of his own day and community. Such a statue has a value beyond all the grace that a sculptor's genius can impart. These marble forms of men and women standing in the market-places and at the cross-roads of the people are the precious stones of nations. Birmingham erected such a memorial to Joseph Sturge, and placed it at the confluence of five roads, or at "The Five Ways,"

just at the entrance of the town on the south-west. The coincidences of the locality are felicitous and striking. Freedom, Peace, Temperance, Charity, and Godliness were the five ways of his good and beautiful life; and it was truly a happy accident to place his monument at such a point. Then the statue itself shows a happy inspiration in the sculptor. Standing among the emblems of his love and good works, the serene and benevolent face seems to beam with the living smile of a beating heart, and the half-extended arm and the open palm to be warm with the pulse of their old sweet life, as if still inviting the African slave-child or the homeless orphan to climb up against his bosom.

The Rev. John Angell James was a contemporary and co-resident with Joseph Sturge, and no town in England or in any other country ever had two more impressive lives than theirs breathing, walking, and working in its midst at the same time. I think it can be truly said, that for the last century, the English Independents have had no minister who has made a deeper or better mark upon the public mind than John Angell James. In every faculty of influence his was eminently fitted to produce this impression. He was not a profound scholar; he pretended to no classical culture. On his way from the humble walks and avocations of common life to the pulpit, he passed

the side-paths of ancient erudition with neither time nor need to enter them. The spirit that called him to his ministry was ever present in him, whispering "This is the way," when he glanced wistfully into those rich affluents of ancient lore. So he made but little if any acquaintance with Demosthenes or Cicero, Homer or Virgil, on the straight and narrow path of his education; but much with the Author and Finisher of his faith. With a single eye and heart for His service, the ardent young man not only forgot the things that were behind, but the things that were on either side of him, keeping the mark and prize of his high calling only and ever in view. And he attained both beyond his own expectation and the best thought of his early friends. He came to the pulpit without the loss of a single lock of his young manhood's strength. That classical culture that so often exhausts the vital heat of the soul in producing mental brilliance, had not sobered or softened the pulse of a single faculty within him. He entered upon his work with all his young enthusiasm at full glow, and with all his great-eyed hope and faith, looking out grandly into the future. Thus, at the outset of his ministry, he threw into it all the native eloquence of his heart; and his lips could not help being eloquent with its utterances. Sometimes when the two were moved with unusual inspiration, he gave them larger poetical license,

and they ran with a rush and a rhapsody into the floweriest meads of rhetoric. Some of his published addresses on special anniversaries or occasions, are deeply marked with these characteristics; more frequently those delivered in the first years of his ministry. But this should not be ascribed to the youthful ecstasies of an exuberant imagination in the speaker. At the time when he delivered his most florid addresses, grave members of the British Parliament and platform orators adopted a style and diction equally ornate. The public taste for glowing and redundant metaphor pervaded every assembly, religious or political; and what would now offend, then delighted the ears of an audience. Sheridan would hardly have ventured to deliver one of his rhapsodies in the hearing of the present orators of the House of Commons. Thus public taste, as it were, creates both its own standards and examples of excellence.

Mr. James was born in Blandford, [illegible]rsetshire, in 1785; and after a short term of [illegible]mical and theological education at what mig[illegible] called the private school of Dr. Bogue at Gos[illegible]was settled as the pastor of Carr's Lane Cha[illegible]irmingham, in September, 1805. He was th[illegible]rdly twenty years of age, but had been "put [illegible]he preaching list" when he was but little mor[illegible]an seventeen; so that his pulpit teachings and [illegible]own tuition in theology literally commenced a[illegible]he same time.

With this small stock of educational preparation he entered upon the work before him. The first were the testing years of his life and character. Like hundreds of young men who have ascended to the pulpit and platform, he was exposed to the imminent peril of that fluency of speech and richness of voice which have carried away nine in ten of them upon a noisy current of shallow thought into the dead sea of oblivion. For several years he seems to have yielded to these seductive and effeminating facilities of delivery. Few men could have been more tempted to obey their impulse and guidance. His voice was susceptible of all the music of poetic and pathetic modulation. He could play his florid metaphors and easily-worded sentences upon it as upon an instrument of ten strings. Then, breathing into the strain all the fervour of deep and sincere feeling, what more could he need to become an effective preacher, and build up [redacted]eat fellowship and congregation in Carr's La[redacted]apel? In the course of a few years, however, h[redacted]nd, to a hopeful and salutary grief, that one th[redacted]s lacking to his ministry—deeply-studied thou[redacted]. He forthwith set himself bravely to its elabora[redacted]. He seized hold of all the helps in his reach. [redacted]e read with earnest and persevering reflection [redacted]d the more he read and reflected the more he d[redacted]usted those qualities on which he had hitherto g[redacted]tly relied. His sermons and ad-

dresses began to grow in intellectual vigour; and he began to rise as a preacher. He was invited to preach a sermon in London. It made an impression not only for its graces of elocution, but for its intellectual force and logical structure. He was soon after invited to speak at an annual meeting of the London Missionary Society, at that time presenting about the only forum to ministers of different denominations for platform speeches. This was a long stride, and he at first shrank from it. But encouraged by an old friend and adviser to make the effort, he did so with a large measure of success. Referring to it, he says: "It so happened that I was rather happy in my speech, which elicited some very encouraging terms of approbation, at which I was as much surprised as gratified. From that time I commenced my career as a speech-maker—a business of which, though I have not been unsuccessful in it, I [redacted] never very fond."

Not long after this, when he wa[redacted]ut twenty-six years of age, he made a mor[redacted]borate and extended speech at the annual [redacted]ting of the Birmingham Auxiliary to the Bri[redacted]nd Foreign Bible Society. He threw all the [redacted]and fervour of his imagination, heart, soul, n[redacted]nd strength into this oration, which even [redacted]ter years he regarded as the best he ever deli[redacted]. It inaugurated for him a new era and [redacted] of influence,

which at that time began to be felt beyond the boundaries of his own country. This address was printed by the London committee of the Society as a full and effective exposition of its principles and objects. It was circulated by thousands, and read by persons of all denominations throughout the kingdom. This was followed by other productions, generally sermons and addresses delivered on special occasions, then prepared and sometimes amplified into a considerable volume for the press. "The Sunday School Teachers' Guide" was a book thus expanded from a single address; and in a few years it passed through twenty editions. His power as a public speaker and writer came to be well known throughout the country, and large audiences assembled to listen to him wherever he appeared. The greatest oratorical effort he ever made was perhaps his address in behalf of the L[redacted]n Missionary Society, in Surrey Chapel, in [redacted], 1819. It lasted two hours, and was delive[redacted]ithout reference to a single written note, and [redacted]out a moment's hesitation. He was then a[redacted] meridian of his manhood and of his reputat[redacted]s a speaker. "At the close of the first ho[redacted]ys his biographer, "the preacher requested p[redacted]ion to pause for a few minutes, and the peo[redacted]ng a hymn. Such was the excitement of [redacted] congregation, that during this temporary in[redacted]ption of the discourse, oranges

were thrown into the pulpit to refresh the exhausted orator. The hymn finished, he rose again, and, recovering his strength, thundered on for another hour."

It is doubtful if any address delivered from the pulpit ever was listened to with more enthusiastic admiration than this brilliant oration. It is said that even the place and the subject did not restrain old men in the front gallery from giving audible manifestations of their applause. As he approached the autumn of life, his power in the pulpit became more perceptible and impressive. It was when the autumnal tints of those concluding years had touched his great bushy head and beard and strongly-marked features, that I first saw and heard him. The earnestness of his soul in his work, his voice, mellowed like a sabbath bell that had called a dozen generations to the sanctuary, the deep solemnity of his manner, the sheen of a godly life that seemed to surround him like a halo, the very reflection of the thoughts he had put forth upon the world through his books—all gave to his discourse a power which I had never seen equalled in any other minister on either side of the Atlantic. I first met him the first hour of my first visit to Birmingham in 1846. Without any introduction or previous acquaintance, I had ventured to write to him a year or two prior to my coming to England, and had the

great pleasure of receiving a most cordial letter in reply. When, therefore, he gave me his hand next after Joseph Sturge, at the house of that good man, he seemed to impersonate, to their fullest conception, all the ideas I had formed of his character, as well as to deepen the reverence with which it had inspired me. His personal kindness, and the deep interest he manifested in the peace and anti-slavery movements, and other philanthropic enterprises of the day, have made for me a memory which I shall ever cherish as a rich treasure. This sentiment of esteem and reverence grew deeper at every subsequent interview, and I seldom visited Birmingham without seeing him and listening to him in Carr's Lane Chapel.

But however large his congregation, and however often he may be able to address other audiences, the most eloquent minister can reach but a comparatively few persons with his voice. He must print his thoughts to press in order to reach and move the million. This John Angell James did, to a degree and effect which no other minister, of any denomination, has attained for the last century. It is doubtful if Baxter or even Bunyan has been so widely read. Mr. James gave to the world, as the best legacy of his life, seventeen volumes, some of which have had a vast circulation. His "Anxious Inquirer after Salvation Directed and Encouraged" must rank only second

to Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress" in number of copies printed and circulated in different languages and countries. No man in writing a book could be more deeply impressed with the conviction that he was moved by the spirit of God than was the author of this remarkable volume. That conviction seemed to be deeper at the end than at the beginning of the work. He charges its readers to "take it up with something of the awe that warns you how you touch a holy thing." Thousands on both sides of the Atlantic have taken it up in this way to all the benefit which its author hoped of it.

In addition to all the graces and strength of his faculties as a preacher and writer, Mr. James was endowed with an executive and originating mind of great tact and power. He was virtually the founder and father of the Spring Hill College, Birmingham, for the education of Independent ministers. Although few ever reached the eminence he attained with so little academic and classical culture, no one could have a greater sense of its value and necessity. It was his earnest and unwearied aim to raise the scholastic standard of the ministers of all the Nonconformist denominations, and to elevate them to the level and reputation of Oxford and Cambridge graduates. The institution at Spring Hill was, therefore, the object of his large and generous solicitude,

and he laboured for its well-being and well-doing in season and out of season. His earnest public and private appeals brought to its aid liberal contributions. He was a father to all the young men it educated for the ministry, and watched over, counselled, and encouraged them with the kindliest suavity of Christian affection, and assisted many of them in time of need from his own purse.

But his executive and originating talent was next brought into action on a larger field. He now became virtually the founder and father of "The Evangelical Alliance," of whose objects and operations the whole civilized world has heard much in the last twenty years. He had long been exercised with grief at the alienations or seeming estrangements existing between different branches of the Christian church holding the same fundamental doctrines of religious faith. He writes, "One morning, at my private devotions, I was much led out in prayer on this subject, and a suggestion came forcibly to my mind to do something to effect a union of Christians in some visible bond. I rose from my knees and sketched out a rough scheme of union. The May meeting of the Congregational Union soon followed. At that meeting, I called the attention of the brethren present to the subject before them. Indeed, this was my chief object in going

to the meeting." From that "rough scheme of union" was shaped and laid the basis of an organization that unites a vast number of churches in both hemispheres in sentiment and action, for the purity and spread of the Christian faith.

Mr. James himself was a living bond of union between English and American churches. His letters to eminent ministers in the United States would make a large and interesting volume. No man in England ever did more to draw together the two countries by the liens of Christian fellowship and sympathy; and both have common and equal cause to hold at equal value the legacy of his life and labours. While giving his best efforts to the organization of an Evangelical Alliance which should embrace and unite the Protestant churches in both hemispheres, he illustrated what such a vast communion should be, feel, and do, by becoming himself the soul and centre of an inner and smaller Evangelical Alliance in Birmingham. And the great one he founded would do well to take his little home fellowship as a pattern in spirit and action. Church and Dissent never fraternized more beautifully than in the Christian sympathy and companionship between John Angell James and the Rev. Dr. Miller, the eminent clergyman of the Established Church in Birmingham, who will leave the record of a great and good life for some one to write. No minister

in England was a more out-and-out Nonconformist than Mr. James, and perhaps no clergyman more a "churchman" than Dr. Miller. But that in which they agreed was far holier and lovelier than that in which they differed; and even the psalmist, if he had seen their manner of walk and conversation with each other, might have recognized the original of his ideal: "Behold, how goodly and pleasant a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" When Mr. James was approaching his end, and was prostrated by an alarming attack of his disease, Dr. Miller offered prayer for his recovery on Sunday morning in his church. This drew from the venerable invalid a touching expression of gratitude, not only for such a token of sympathy, but for others of the same spirit.

Mr. James died the 1st of October, 1859, a few months after good Joseph Sturge was called to his rest and reward. Thus the two men, so united in sympathy and loving fellowship in good works during their lives, were separated in their deaths by only a small space of time. Their graves lie but a little way apart—one in the yard of the Friends' Meeting House in Bull Street, the other under the pulpit he filled for half a century in Carr's Lane. The shadow of a great sorrow lay dark and heavy on the town from one funeral to the other. For no other town ever had two such men living in it one year and buried in it the next.

## CHAPTER VI.

INSTITUTIONS AND PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND PUBLIC SPIRIT OF BIRMINGHAM—KING EDWARD'S SCHOOL—THE TOWN HALL—HOSPITALS, CHURCHES, AND CHAPELS.

AS Birmingham is a young town, growing within the memory of present residents from 50,000 to 300,000 inhabitants, it cannot boast of any monuments of antiquity of impressive date or character. The two or three churches whose inner walls or towers could show a goodly roll of centuries, have been so rebuilt or renovated that they present no venerable aspect. Indeed, excepting a few brick-and-timber buildings of the Elizabethan period, or houses that show their bones flush with their flesh, the town looks almost as American as Chicago. It has only one building that may be called a speciality in the way of architecture—that is the Town Hall. This is the most symmetrical and classical building in England; and looks like one of the grand edifices of ancient Greece transported in all its grace and glory to stand up in the

midst of a city-full of modernmost buildings, as if to show by contrast how far they have departed from the architectural taste and science of the old masters of Pericles' day. The Madeleine in Paris and the Girard College in Philadelphia are the only buildings I ever saw with which this hall may be compared; indeed, the three are copies of the same original—the Temple of Jupiter Stator at Rome. Its interior structure and aspect are noble and grand, well fitted for the great voices of public opinion and the voices tuned to gentler melodies. For it is not only a public building, but a public institution in itself. It is a great educational agency for the enlightenment of the masses. It has played a great part in forming the public spirit and character of Birmingham. Here the population have met, almost *en masse*, from year to year, and been moved and moulded by eloquent orators who seemed to draw new power from the platform on which they stood. Indeed, if any man has any eloquence in his soul, the scene presented on some of these occasions must draw it forth. I have witnessed many of these during the last twenty years, and have always thought that they must present the most inspiring spectacle to the speaker. The scene from the platform when John Bright is shaking the very walls with his eloquence is grand almost to sublimity. The

floor of the hall is cleared of every seat, and seemingly half an acre of solid men, with eager and upturned faces, are surging to and fro, as if the breath of the orator were moving on the face of the human sea, and it were heaving in a ground-swell under the power of his thoughts. Now a great wave, crested with a thousand heads, sets in towards the platform with a tremendous surge. All those eager faces and eyes for a moment are buried in the trough of the sea; then comes the ebb and undertow, and they flash up again upon the speaker, and the retreating wave softens off into gentle ripples against the walls. On some of these occasions seven or eight thousand men are massed before and around the speaker; and when he puts them under the mesmeric spell of his eloquence in some powerful passage or peroration, the sight is worth a long journey to witness; and he who witnesses it with attentive faculties must see what a power in itself is such a hall for shaping the mind of a town on the great questions of the day.

When one has attended such a public meeting in the Town Hall, he should witness the spectacle presented within its walls at the great Musical Festival, which takes place once in three years. On this occasion philanthropy is set to music. The grand organ is owned by the General Hospital,

and the notes it discounts for that institution are as good as gold, and produce a great deal of it. It was built in London and opened in 1834. It was then, probably, the largest and most powerful organ in England, and cost between £3,000 and £4,000. The organ case or, better, organ house, is forty feet wide, fifty-four high, and seventeen deep. The largest wood pipe measures in the interior 224 cubic feet. The bellows contain 300 square feet of surface, and require the pressure of three tons weight for their necessary action. The wires or "trackers," if laid in a straight line, would reach above five miles. There are seventy-eight draw-stops, four sets of keys, and above 4,000 pipes. The weight of the instrument is above forty-five tons. Once in three years this vast harp of 4,000 strings plays for the benefit of the General Hospital, blending its grand melodies with the best human voices that can be found in the United Kingdom. This Musical Festival or banquet lasts four days, and the great hall is filled with as highly a cultivated and elegant audience as the town and surrounding country can produce. A large number of the nobility and gentry are present from all the midland counties; and all being in full dress, an assembly may be witnessed presenting a remarkable contrast with one of the political meetings we have noticed. The tickets are £1. 1*s.* and 10*s.* 6*d.* for the morning performances, and 15*s.* and 8*s.* for

the evening concerts. The whole net proceeds, after the expenses are deducted, go to the support of the Hospital. Thus a rare opportunity and inducement are presented to make a virtue out of pleasure, and to give both self and sympathy a rich treat at the same time. The first festival was held in 1778 at St. Philip's Church, the best building then in the town for such performances, which consisted of selections of sacred music, and lasted three days. The total receipts were £800, and the net profit £299. In 1834 the festival was held in the new Town Hall and with the new organ; and the receipts were £13,527, and the net profit £4,035. In 1864 the receipts amounted to £13,777, and the clear profit to £5,256. The grand total received at all these Triennial Festivals, from 1768 to 1864 inclusive, is £216,499; and the whole net amount realized for the Hospital is £84,589. Thus music has had a beautiful mission in connexion with the Birmingham Town Hall and its organ. It has brought songs of gladness and gratitude to thousands in the long, dark night of suffering, and, like the angel at the pool of Bethesda, helped many a poor maimed or sick man and woman into the healing fountain.

The Free Grammar School, on New Street, is a large and well-proportioned Gothic building, with less space sacrificed to acute angles than is generally the case with that order of architecture. It

is an edifice that will correspond with the most elegant improvements that the enterprising and ambitious town may make for half a century to come, and looks well beside the largest and most ornate structure lately erected—the Birmingham Exchange. This is one of the foundation schools of that interesting and amiable sovereign of educational memory, Edward VI. He was at heart the best Edward England ever had; and being so good it was a pity he did not live and reign as long as some of his ancestors of the same name. He was a better and braver crusader than any of them; for, cross in hand, he marched to the rescue of really a nation from the sepulchre of ignorance. And, what showed the force of his feeling, wish, and work in the matter, like another Peter the Hermit, he enlisted a large number of good and true men in the same enterprise. He not only had Peabody's purse and heart for the education of the people, but he made Peabodies and a kind of philanthropic age by his example and influence. If any one will take the census of educational and benevolent institutions founded in that age, he will see how it was marked with good will and good works for the children of the poor. Then it was so easy and cheap to plant an acorn that should grow into a wide-spreading oak of strength and protection. It was a generous act in old James Harper to give a pasture on Holborn Hill to the education

of the children of Bedford, his native town. A ten-acre field, though roughened with gorse, brachens, and thistles, must have been worth £10 an acre in fee simple, when he made the donation. One hundred pounds made a large sum in his day; but it was only the acorn. That furzy pasture has been covered for a century or more with a little city-full of houses, and it is now the oak under whose branches thousands of Bedford children have received an education as free as the light of heaven.

An acorn was planted in Birmingham in the same way. It is said that the inhabitants of the town and the people of King's Norton petitioned the crown for a school at the same time. In both cases the petitioners were offered land or money to the value of £20 per annum. The ready cash was preferred by the Nortonians, whilst the Birmingham men chose the land; which, like Harper's pasture on Holborn Hill, then lay mostly out of the town. But it has grown into a grand oak. It is now in the very heart of the town, and covered with its best buildings; one of which is the magnificent Exchange. The present income is about £12,000, and at the end of the century it must amount to £50,000 per annum from the leases that will drop in by that time. It has been creditable to the people of Birmingham, and a proof of their public spirit, that they have watched

with jealous vigilance over this institution, and have stoutly resisted every insidious effort or tendency to make it "a close borough," or a fat living for a few luxurious and idle *selfs*, as many great and noble charities have been perverted. They had a long and hard struggle to rescue it from this condition or peril, and to utilize it for the benefit of the town. They not only succeeded in having the present edifice built upon the old site, against the will of influential parties, but in opening up four branch schools to be supported out of the funds of the institution and to be carried on under its direction. In these affiliated schools about 500 boys and the same number of girls are taught reading, writing, and arithmetic by thirty-eight masters, mistresses, and assistants. The education provided at the Grammar School is of high order, embracing classics, mathematics, and other branches of college studies, together with that practical and varied instruction necessary for commercial life. No expense is spared in securing the services of first-rate masters, two of whom have become bishops. The number of pupils in all departments is about 600, taught by upwards of twenty masters, who are generously paid for their services. Indeed, the head master receives a salary equal to that of the Secretary of State at Washington; and the aggregate received by all the masters of the institution is about £6,000 per annum;

being equal to £10 per head of the pupils for tuition.

There is a feature of this admirable institution which an American must admire; and it is common to a large number of similar foundations in England. In the first place, there are *ten* scholarships awarded every year to pupils that have reached a certain standard of excelling, and who receive each £50 per annum for four years, or for the whole period of his college course should he go to Oxford or Cambridge. This is capital. This is a noble and generous stimulus and help for a young man who has the mind but not the means to acquire a university education and the *status* and capacity it confers. Thus £500 per annum are paid out of the income of the institution for these ten scholarships. Then in addition to all this encouragement and aid which it extends to the pupils, there are several annual prizes founded by friends of the school. The governors, twenty in number, give two prizes of £10 every Christmas to boys of the first class, not under fifteen years of age, who pass the best examination in all branches taught in the English department. Bishop Lee, of Manchester, once head master of the school, gave £100 to found an annual prize for a critical essay on a passage of the Greek Testament. William Chance, Esq., of the great glass manufactory, appropriately

gave an annual prize for encouraging the study of the Holy Scriptures in English and Greek. Others have founded smaller prizes to stimulate and reward study in different departments of useful learning.

The annual examinations are always conducted by eminent scholars from the universities, and give additional value to the awards. The public distribution of the prizes is an occasion of great interest. I have been present at the two last anniversaries, and have witnessed the proceedings with lively satisfaction. The cheering of the boys that fills the hall as the successful competitors ascend to the platform and receive the prize books from the hands of the head master, surrounded by the whole corps of teachers and examiners, and the audible or visible sympathy of the elder portion of the audience, are enough to animate a casual spectator with the spirit of the scene. The sum paid for these prize books in 1859 was put down at £120. Declamations and recitations in English, Latin, Greek, and German, form an interesting part of the proceedings on these occasions, and show very creditable attainments in elocution as well as thought and memory on the part of the young men. But, what is peculiarly pleasing, the head master reads, with a satisfaction which the whole school and audience share with him, the roll of merit on the part of former pupils

who are contending for the prizes of Oxford and Cambridge, and every distinction won and announced is hailed by the boys with a ringing cheer of pride and congratulation.

The Birmingham and Midland Institute is an admirable institution, that does credit to the public spirit of the town. As a building it mates well with the Town Hall, over against which it stands. It is to the instruction of the people in scientific and artistic industries what the Town Hall is to the culture and development of public sentiment and opinion. Here artisans, miners, and men of every mechanical business are taught the science and economy of their occupations, not as a theory merely, but as applied practically and technically to their trades and professions. The classes embrace chemistry as applied to various manufactures and agriculture, mechanics, metallurgy, mineralogy, geology, ventilation of mines, and mining engineering. The first stone of the Institute was laid by Prince Albert, in November, 1855, and the lecture theatre was opened by Lord Brougham in October, 1857. So it has been in operation only ten years; but within that period it has educed and trained up a working force of practical science of inestimable value to the town. It has founded a home School of Design and produced home artists who are already competing with those brought from France and Italy in drawing and modelling pat-

terns of exquisite taste for gold and silver ware, *papier-machè*, furniture, and other elegant manufactures. Any young man may here fit himself to fill the first position in his trade that science, taste, and skill can make, and this, too, at cheap and easy terms as to time and money. Then there is a literary department, comprising reading room and lectures and other sources of useful entertainment and knowledge.

The Free Library, in the same building, is the most popular institution in the town, in origin, object, and use. It is the best exponent and illustration of the public spirit of the people. It was founded for and by them, and they owe it to no one else. This is as it should be and will be in times to come. Drinking Fountains are the order of the day. They at first originated as the benefactions of some generous individual, who set an impressive example to municipal authorities. Then they speedily grew to be the standing and regular institutions of the community. So it has been with the Drinking Fountains of Knowledge. Some munificent donor, like William B. Astor, of New York, or William Brown, of Liverpool—to use a homely simile—has "killed two birds with one stone:" he has founded a great library and opened its thousands of volumes to the people to read as free and cheap as water; and the library thus founded is to be a perpetual and effective monu-

ment to his name and generosity to the public. It is an invaluable institution for which its author deserves to be held in everlasting and grateful remembrance. But the thirsty masses cannot drink at this fountain with the same sentiment as at one of their own opening and ownership. After all, in drinking at such a private benefaction, the water of knowledge has to them a little of the look and flavour of charity-soup. The Birmingham men were the last in the kingdom to content themselves with such a source of mental refreshment, even if one had been opened to them as large and luxurious as the Astor Library in New York. They did what no community in America has yet done; and in the doing of it they have taken a step in advance of anything we have accomplished in this department of popular education. We have taxed every man, whether he has children or not, to open and support free schools; but we have never gone so far as to levy a rate upon the population of a town to establish a *Free Library.* In this the Birmingham people have beaten the most enlightened and munificent community in America. To their credit and to our reproach be this said; or if not to our reproach, then to our stimulus in following this example.

This invaluable institution embraces two departments: the Reference Library, and the Lending Library and News Room; the former being

opened to the public in 1866, the latter in 1865. The Reference Library is truly a vast treasure-house of every department of human learning; and, to use an American simile of hospitality, "you will always find the latch-string outside the door." The lofty circular hall represents the sphere of knowledge it embraces. The Philosopher, the Historian, Theologian, Lawyer, Inventor, and Scientific Mechanic may each find here an almost boundless mine from which he may draw, as cheaply as water, the most valuable deposits of thought, observation and fact. Here a poor but earnest learner may explore a volume which cost more than a small farm in Illinois, and transfer the whole harvest of its wisdom into his own stock of knowledge. Here an inventive mind may run through the whole forest of Patents, Improvements, and Mechanical Suggestions which a century of the world's best genius has produced. As an illustration of the richness of this special department, so valuable to this great mechanical community, the fact may suffice, that it contains 2,030 Specifications of Patents. The whole number of volumes in the Reference Library is 18,225. The Arts and Sciences number 1,968 volumes on the list; History and Biography, 3,637; Poetry and the Drama, 720. As an indication of how much this great storehouse of knowledge is used and appreciated, the daily average issue of books for

the fifty-four days after the first opening amounted to 212 volumes.

The Central Lending Library and News Room is on the first floor of the same building, and was opened in September, 1865. It contains 11,276 volumes, of which History, Biography, Voyages and Travels have 2,304. This is really a Drinking Fountain of Knowledge on a more liberal basis than those opened in large towns to quench the thirst of dry and dusty men with water. For in the latter case the ladle or basin is always chained to the fountain, and the drinker cannot carry any of the water home to his family. But at this Lending Library he may find a perpetual spring of pure and wholesome literature for himself, wife, and children and other inmates of his house, and that as cheap as air, after it is once set running. It is only the first step that costs him a little thought and effort. He must get one burgess or voter of the borough to sign the following voucher:

"I, the undersigned, being a burgess of the Borough of Birmingham, declare that I believe
occupation age of No.
to be a person to whom books may be safely intrusted for perusal; and I hereby undertake to replace, or pay the value of any book belonging to the Corporation of Birmingham, which shall be lost or materially injured by said borrower."

This condition is not designed nor expected to diminish or restrict the use of the Library. It

serves to impress upon every would-be reader the conviction that the privilege is worth a little personal thought and effort on his part. No burgess would refuse to sign such a voucher for any honest applicant. Up to the end of 1866, 7,148 persons had been qualified as borrowers. During that year 164,120 books were lent out to the people of the town, making an average daily issue of 588. In the same department is the News Room, in which is spread out to all who would read nearly all the leading journals and periodicals of the kingdom. As it was intended, the working men of the town constitute perhaps the largest number of callers. An interesting fact will show how eagerly they use and enjoy the privilege. They are allowed an hour for dinner, and a large number employed within an accessible distance from the Library spend in it half the time allotted to the meal; thus making twenty or thirty minutes' reading a portion or condiment of their mid-day repast.

Liberal provision has also been made for remote districts of the town, and several branch libraries have been opened on the same basis. In addition to these free sources of knowledge and mental entertainment, there are many other libraries established, where books may be had on easy terms. One of these, The Old Library, in Union Street, was founded under the direction of Dr.

Priestley, and now numbers between thirty and forty thousand volumes. There is also a unique and interesting collection of books in a room adjoining the great Reference Library, which will afford much entertainment to the admirers of the great Warwickshire bard, as men of local ambition venture to call him. It is called The Shakespeare Memorial Library, and is designed to contain a complete collection of all the editions of Shakespeare's works, and of the books which have emanated from them. Very satisfactory progress has been made in the collection, and it promises to realize the best hopes of its founders. In a word, it is doubtful if any town of equal population in Great Britain or America has opened a larger or cheaper provision of books for its population, and no English town can show a larger muster-roll of readers per thousand of its inhabitants. Thus a large and broad basis has been laid on which to erect the structure of public opinion in Birmingham, and to increase its force and effect upon the country and its government.

I have interpolated the Town Hall and Free Libraries among the educational institutions of Birmingham, because they really occupy a middle place in the agencies of popular training and knowledge. As it is probable that a considerable number of American readers of these notes will

be passing through the town in course of the year, I would suggest to them that they should visit the Blue Coat Charity School, which partly walls in St. Philip's Churchyard on the north-east. They will see in the entrance hall how a beautiful institution grows by that it feeds upon; or how it reproduces, perpetuates, and expands itself. This hall is hung with tall and wide tablets, recording, in gilt letters, the names and donations of benevolent patrons for more than one hundred years. It will be interesting to count up the bequests of £1,000 and upwards, as a proof of the munificent good-will which the institution has won from the beginning. Some of the records are full of pleasant reminiscence. They are the donations of Blue Coat Boys who have gone out and made a good position and fortune in the world, and remembered gratefully the *Alma mater* that trained them for useful life. The average number of children in the school is one hundred and forty boys and sixty girls, who are lodged, fed, clothed, and educated in the building. In the election of children for admission, preference is given to orphans, or those who have lost one parent.

Spring Hill College, both as an edifice and an institution, is an educational establishment of high rank and eminent usefulness. It is a theological school for the training of ministers of the Inde-

pendent body; and it has sent out many able preachers and teachers who have made their mark, and a good and deep one. It was first opened in 1838, in the private mansion of the family of George Storer Mansfield, who founded it with certain landed estates he devoted to the object. It soon outgrew its limited and inconvenient accommodation, and a new and noble edifice, larger than any one connected with Harvard University or Yale College in New England, was erected on a beautiful and picturesque site near the village of Moseley, called Spring Hill. The expense of the building, land, and furnishing amounted to about £18,000, raised by the voluntary contributions of friends. It has an able corps of professors, not only of Theology and Ecclesiastical History and Polity, but of Philosophy, Classical and Oriental languages. It supplies studios and dormitories for thirty-six students, and, adopting a figure pertaining to water-works, it acts as a very important feeder to the pulpits of the Independents throughout the kingdom.

The Queen's College, almost facing the Town Hall, is another foundation institution, for which the town is indebted to the munificent generosity and public spirit of Mr. Sands Cox. The building itself is worthy of the object of the College when realized to the full wish and expectation of the founder, a consummation not yet attained.

It furnishes accommodation to seventy students, fitting themselves for Medicine and Surgery, Arts, Laws, Civil Architecture and Engineering. In connexion with the College are Museums of Human and Comparative Anatomy, containing more than 3,000 specimens. In a word it has all the raw material of an important and first-rate institution, which must inevitably be utilized hereafter to larger results than it has yet produced.

The Proprietary School, situated on the Hagley Road, near the intersecting point called the Five Ways, is an energetic and well-conducted establishment, in which instruction of a high order is given in classical and commercial education. It is a first-rate middle-class school, with a large force of teachers and a principal of eminence. Dr. Badham, one of the best Greek scholars in England, was for many years at the head of the school, which attained a high reputation under him.

The Diocesan Training College, at Saltley, is another very creditable and useful institution, founded by private contributions. It is a training school for the education of teachers for the dioceses of Lichfield, Worcester, and Hereford, and was opened in 1852. There is also the Reformatory Institution in Saltley, for the rescue of juvenile vagrants and criminals from a life of vice and misery, and for training them for useful-

ness and happiness in the world. Here they are apprenticed to various occupations—farming, shoemaking, tailoring, printing, &c.; and when they have acquired these trades, places are sought for them, not only in England but in Australia, Canada, and other British colonies. Both these institutions are greatly indebted for their origin and support to the Hon. C. B. Adderley, who gave the land which they occupy, and, what is equally valuable, his earnest sympathy and generous goodwill. The institution has grown to meet the demand for its benevolent offices, and now has sufficient accommodation for 100 boys.

There are many other reformatory and educational institutions in Birmingham and its suburbs, established on the voluntary principle for which the town is distinguished. Indeed, one who looks forward in the expectation or hope to see a uniform or unsectarian system of education adopted, must notice, with a little concern, the rapid rise and extension of *denominational* schools. The number of churches and chapels that have opened day schools as an integral part of their establishments, seems to be increasing to an extent which may interpose an obstacle to a national system. In many cases, the school house is a part or continuation of the church or chapel building, and frequently numbers several hundred children. It is a matter of common occurrence to hear of the

opening of a chapel and school room, as if they were part and parcel of the same denominational establishment. Although an earnest educationalist may feel as St. Paul did with regard to the preaching of the gospel, and say he cares not for any amount of contention in the education of children so they be instructed, still this contention or competition may oppose a serious difficulty to what we in America called a Common School System, and which a vast number of enlightened men in England wish to see established in the United Kingdom.

Few towns of equal population equal Birmingham in ample and varied provision for the sick, poor, and afflicted. The charitable institutions represent every form of sympathy with suffering; and are too numerous to notice singly or in detail. Two, however, deserve a fuller description than these pages will allow. The General Hospital is truly a noble institution, and ranks among the first in the country for its capacity and liberality of accommodation. But there is a unique feature distinguishing it from other establishments of the same character. Never yet on the face of the earth, I am confident, was there a building that listened to so much groaning within its walls and yet produced so much music outside of them. Never did suffering and song so act and re-act upon each other. As it has already been noticed,

once in three years there is the most luxurious banquet of music, lasting for four consecutive days, in the Town Hall. Nothing in England or Europe can equal it, both for place and performers. All present at the great Festival in 1867 must have carried away this impression. Well, the invalids and sufferers in the General Hospital had something more and better than the crumbs that fell from this table so loaded with precious delicacies. The solos of Sweden's other nightingale, of Titiens, Sherrington, Reeves, and Santley, and the grand choruses that by turns lifted the entranced thousands half-way to heaven and held them there in sublime fascination, these did more than "raise a mortal to the skies"—they "drew an angel down" with cordials, medicines, good clothing, and tender watch and care for all the suffering inmates of the Hospital for a whole year long. Miriam's Song, in the "Israel in Egypt," gives songs of gladness and gratitude in a hundred nights to crippled scores of men and women within the dim, still wards of the asylum. The voices that swell and meander through the glorious harmonies of "Elijah" set a thousand ravens a-wing with sustenance and solace for these poor and afflicted children of suffering and sorrow.

The Queen's Hospital is another and supplementary institution of the same character and object. Among other means adopted for the sup-

port of these establishments, one developed by the Rev. Dr. Miller, Rector of St. Martin's, is an instrumentality which produces more than money. Through his influence the system was adopted of having the claims of these hospitals presented simultaneously on a given Sunday in all the churches and chapels of the town, and a collection taken in their behalf. Thus the whole church-going population of all denominations, including Jews and Roman Catholics, on that day, have their thoughts concentrated upon these charitable institutions, and are thus disciplined in general philanthropy as well as local benevolence.

The improvements in Birmingham, within my own personal remembrance and observation, indicate the public spirit of its inhabitants. New Street would be almost unrecognizable to one returning to the town after twenty years absence; especially when the Midland Bank, now arising on its foundations, shall have been completed. The Great Central Railway Station, into which five different lines converge in the heart of the town, has not its equal in the kingdom for the roofed space it encloses. The area within the walls is 1,100 feet long and 212 feet wide, and the whole of this great breadth is spanned by single arches resting simply on pillars on each side. No other arched roof of 212 feet span has been attempted in England, or perhaps in the world. The Exchange

flanks this great station building on the north, and is a centre-piece of which the town may be justly proud, whatever improvements may follow hereafter. Bingley Hall is another building of great capacity and utility, especially for annual exhibitions of cattle, sheep, horses, pigs, and poultry, which have attained a first-class rank for the quality and number of agricultural implements and productions, as well as of animals presented. Curzon Hall, another building of large and good dimensions, was erected and opened in 1866, and may be called, in close resemblance to a celebrated Venetian edifice, the Dogs' Palace. Although a circus occasionally performs within its walls, it is really devoted to the greatest provincial parliament of dogs in Great Britain. Hundreds of every lineage, use, name, size, stripe, and language, are here assembled about Christmas time, and discuss questions of canine and social economy with a gravity and earnestness which few human conventions frequently imitate. Great lion-faced St. Bernarders and little Scotch terriers, with their spiteful eyes peering through moppy meshes of hair, take part in these animated debates. It is one of the most interesting reunions in the animal world that an amateur of it can witness.

Birmingham, like many large and growing towns both in England and America, had filled a great area with long and intersecting streets of houses,

shops, and factories, before it thought of leaving a goodly breathing and recreating space for the people. In this respect it followed the habit of many New England towns, whose first settlers cut down all the trees, both great and small, to make a proper "clearing" for their houses, without thinking how much their children would prize the shade and ornament of some of the majestic and primeval oaks thus brought low by the axe. This mistake they discovered by the time those children were born, and tried to rectify it by planting little scions by the decaying stumps of the monarchs of the forest which they had levelled. Thus Birmingham had a population of 250,000 before it had a public park, or a single green acre which they could call their own as a community. The first, comprising a space of twelve acres, was the generous and opportune gift of the Hon. C. B. Adderley, at Saltley: it was opened in 1856, and made one of the munificent benefactions to which the town is indebted to his philanthropy. A second was opened the following year, containing thirty acres, presented by Lord Calthorpe, and bearing his name. But, as in the case of the Free Library, the people resolved to have a Drinking-Fountain of Air of their own, purchased by their own money, and not the gift of one aristocratic and wealthy patron. Aston Hall—a stately, baronial-like mansion, just in the greenest outskirt of the town—came into

the market, with all its stately appurtenances of trees, lawns, walks, drives, histories, legends, rime, and romance of antiquity. It had come down through several centuries of varied occupation, with but a dim record of the families that had inhabited it. A company was formed to buy up this estate, which failing to effect the purchase, the corporation, assisted by private subscriptions of £7,000, came to the aid of the enterprise, and secured the valuable property for the use of the people. The park contains forty-two acres, affording sufficient space for recreation, while it is so situated as to appear only the central point of view to a park of a dozen miles in extent, picturesquely wooded and dashed with gleams of water pleasantly interspersed with the green and gold of the variegated landscape. Then, standing on a gently-rounded eminence, commanding all this lovely scenery, is the great hall with its turrets, terraces, stables, and outbuildings. It has been turned into a museum; so that, when tired of walks or sports in the park, young and old may season their recreations with a little useful knowledge. In a word, no other town in the kingdom has such a baronial estate for the free use of its people.

Aston Church is a noble old structure, "to the manor born," though probably several hundred years before the present hall was erected, to which it seems to have been an *apanage*. The

external is more impressive than its interior aspect, as it looks to be larger at a little distance than it really is. Perhaps this impression is produced by the massive tower and its tall and graceful spire. Both pedestal and statue are as graceful as colossal. Its "God's Acre" holds the dust of a dozen generations, and is filled to its walls with monuments of every grade and shade. While walking among them with Capern, the postman poet, an incident occurred which I hoped would stir his muse to some appropriate reflections. The clock, high and deep in the old church tower, tolled the funeral of four sunny hours, as if it were never to greet the birth of another in time. The sound came out into the still air through those massive walls with the silvery quavers of centuries. It seemed to take hold of the deceased hours by their middle minutes, and to breathe over them a plaintive requiem, half sigh and half sob, melting away in a querulous murmur over the cross streets of human graves surrounding the church. While we listened thoughtfully to the murmur as it fluttered outward upon the still blue air, a sharp, piercing screech split the silence of nature, startling the sleeping leaves to a quiver of alarm. What a transition! There, on a high embanked railway just across the brook, was the huge black serpent of a coal train, with all its loose vertebræ

grating and rocking at their joints, when, just at this point, as if a sharp agony had seized it, the engine put forth the horrid ejaculation of anger or defiance. The contrast between its smoky blast, and the pathetic, silvery benediction of the old clock in the church tower, brought us back from thoughtful communion with the departed spirits of past centuries to the sharp and rugged realities of this utilitarian age.

The old church in Handsworth is an antique building showing a smattering of various orders of architecture, with old-fashioned square pews, designed for families, facing inward upon each other instead of looking at the minister. But it is a kind of Westminster Abbey to Birmingham, consecrated to the memory of its great dead, whose names have won illustrious fame. First and foremost is a chapel dedicated to James Watt, with a life-size statue in a sitting posture, which ranks among the master-pieces of Chantrey's chisel. Then there are monuments erected to Boulton, his partner and right-hand man, and to others whose lives and labours deserve a respectful memory.

One of the most beautiful little churches in England is the Edgbaston Old Church. Its beauty is not in architectural proportions or pretensions, but in the charm which nature has given it. In the first place, it is picturesquely situated

under the eaves of a stately grove that veils Edgbaston Hall and its park and pool from the road. Then it is completely netted to the very top of its tower with ivy. Hardly a square inch of its bare walls can be seen at a few rods distance. No garden summer-house or bower could be greener from bottom to top. Robed thus by nature in the best vestment she could weave for a sanctuary, it seems to have a more sacred consecration to the worship of God than an archbishop could give to it. One might well feel that Nature joined in the prayers and psalms and spiritual songs within; and it may be hoped that the congregation recognize her presence and participation in their devotions. In the little churchyard, which looks like a hopefully-sculptured doorstone of eternity, sleeps the dust of a sister of Washington Irving, who was the wife of one of the fathers of the town—the venerable Henry Van Wart.

A mile or two further in a westerly direction is the parish church of Harborne, which only lacks the ivy surplice to be even more attractive than that of Edgbaston. It drew me to that rural suburb, and has become as home-like and dear to me as the church of my native village in America. In situation it conforms religiously with the Fourth Commandment. It retires meditatively from the six days' labour, and all its

noise, dust, bustle, and sight; and far from the public roads, invites the worshippers of the village to its quiet sanctuary. They come at the cheering voice of its sabbath bells, which ripples outward across the green valleys to homesteads half hidden and half revealed. And the congregation comes across the broad fields by footpaths that converge from every direction into the solemn aisles of the churchyard trees. The main avenue is nearly a third of a mile in length, with a lofty roofage half the way. The church has no gorgeous east window of coloured glass pictured over with olden saints in fantastic robes of mediæval conception; but Nature, from some tall over-shadowing trees, has hung a curtain of leaves just outside the plain, untinted panes, and thus substituted her cheap and pleasant artistry for the more costly and lifeless pictures done by the painter in oil.

The skirt of Birmingham is very ample and variegated. Though the half that it turns to the fire of The Black Country is badly scorched, crimped, and ragged, the other half is a flowing robe embroidered with emerald and gold. Moseley, Edgbaston, and Harborne are embraced in the latter, and are as goodly suburbs as any town in England can show. Hills, dales, gentle slopes, valleys, and streams, make a picturesque scenery. The residences of many of the prosperous business men of the borough are interspersed in this

landscape, and their ornamental grounds form a pleasant feature. Edgbaston especially is full of these elegant houses and gardens; but nearly all of them are built upon the pan of a lease-trap, which, one of these years, will spring up and catch every one of them, with all their lawns and external embellishments. The evening scenery enjoyed by these suburbs is very unique and even grand. Although the sky is slightly dashed with smoke in the best days, The Black Country reveals itself only at night, and then in its own aurora borealis. As the sun descends in the west it hangs the horizon with curtains of its own crimsoning. Its red twilight softens first into gold, then into pearl, and melts out of the evening sky; then comes the after-glow of the region of fire and smoke. Then upsprings the aurora borealis of The Black Country—the swaling light of a hundred furnaces and forges roaring all through the night. It runs up and down the horizon like summer lightning, crimsoning the edges of the clouds, and the patches of sky between. This light is the halo around the brow of swart and patient Labour—that knows no rest while wealth is dreaming in its sleep.

# CHAPTER VII.

RISE, PROGRESS, AND CHARACTERISTICS OF MECHANICAL AND MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY IN BIRMINGHAM—BRIEF NOTICE OF LEADING BRANCHES AND ESTABLISHMENTS.

SOME characteristics of the manufactures for which Birmingham is distinguished have been already generalized in a passing notice. Still they enter into the life and being of the town so vitally, that it would be irrelevant to the object of this volume not to devote to them an entire chapter. If in this space enough should be stated to create a new interest in the reader in them, he may satisfy it to the fullest extent by reading "Birmingham and the Midland Hardware District," by Samuel Timmins, Esq.—an exhaustive volume, full of the most extensive and instructive information on the subject. Hutton, the witty, apothegmatic historian of the town, writing more than half a century ago, observes that "Birmingham began with the productions of the anvil and probably will end with them." The first half of this statement is true of civilization itself.

The hammer and anvil played the first notes in the Grand March of Humanity in the civilized arts; and the genealogy of all the productions of Birmingham, present and to come, may be traced back to that origin. Fighting-ware—such as guns, swords, bayonets, and pikes—at first predominated among the productions of the hammers and anvils, though hatchets, hoes, and other implements of peaceful husbandry had their place in the early industry of the town. The skill and taste acquired in the manufacture of these articles prepared the way for ornamental works or for articles of luxury and fashion. The pioneer in the introduction of this new art and occupation was John Taylor, who died in 1775, at the age of sixty-four, having acquired a fortune of £200,000 from the business he established, which was the manufacture of metal buttons. Rich-witted, quaint Hutton calls him "the Shakespeare or Newton of his day." He seems to have been a kind of Wedgwood in his line, applying great genius of design to gilt buttons, snuff-boxes, and articles of japanned ware. It is stated that, as far back as the middle of the eighteenth century, he manufactured buttons in his shop of the value of £800 weekly, besides other articles. He also introduced or monopolized the production of painted snuff-boxes, of infinite variety of device. It is said one of his workmen earned three pounds ten shillings per week by painting

them at a farthing each. If this were true, that single hand must have turned out over 160,000 boxes in the year.

The artistic skill which John Taylor's wares had developed and diffused among the mechanics of Birmingham, as it were, lit the candle of a new industry, which again, in its turn, fed and transmitted the light to other departments of trade. This inventive skill, originating in finely-trained perceptions of beauty, is not only the minister but the founder of fashion. Buckles for hat, knee, and shoe became the ruling and raging fashion in the later years of the last century, from the taste and genius bestowed on their manufacture. For a long time they were worn in all civilized countries, and in none more generally among well-to-do people than in republican America. Birmingham and a few towns adjacent monopolized the business and supplied the whole demand for Europe and America. But when the trade was apparently at its height of prosperity, and promised golden harvests for many years to come, it fell in a moment. Fickle Fashion took a new and sudden freak. Although it may well be said of her, reversing the proverb, *Fit, non nascitur*, "made, not born," still the makers could not keep her to their notions and interest. Without a moment's notice, or a motive's impulse which could be understood, she took to the "effeminate shoe-

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string," as it was indignantly styled. The Prince of Wales, the most unlikely man on earth to interfere with the royal prerogative of Fashion, was appealed to in an almost piteous petition to interpose his influence and save the craft from ruin. This petition is a remarkable document. It contains the stoutest remonstrance ever addressed to an intangible despotism stronger than the power of throned kings. In the first place, it shows how many had earned their bread by the fallen trade. It beseeches the Prince to assist in giving employment to "more than 20,000 persons who, in consequence of the prevalence of shoe-strings and slippers," were in great distress. "The first gentleman in Europe," as the Prince aspired and claimed to be, yielded just enough to show the petitioners how little he could arrest the rule of Fashion. He ordered his gentlemen and servants to discard shoe-strings, but it was like opposing a rye-straw to a mountain torrent. The petitioners put a plaintive sentiment in an apothegm of great wisdom and truth. They say, "Fashion is void of feeling and deaf to argument."

But if buckles were obliged to succumb to the dictation of Fashion, a stout resistance was opposed to her rule in the matter of gilt or metal buttons. The protectionists of those times ruled their trades with a rod of iron. The button-makers would not tolerate either competition or rivalry. No shoe-

string innovators should be allowed to poach on their preserves, as they did in the buckle business. They would push the iron ægis of the law against all the inventors and improvers that sought to insinuate themselves into the pale of their profits. A statute enacted in the reign of the first George existed, and this they determined to see enforced. Whoever undertakes to write the history of Protection, should cite in full this Act. How strangely it reads in the ears that listen to the new doctrines of the present day! It imposed a penalty of £5 "on any Taylor or other person convicted of making, covering, selling, or using, or setting on to a garment any Buttons covered with cloth or of any stuff of which garments are made." But if "Love laughs at locksmiths," fashion laughed at all the bolts and bars which The Black Country iron and coal could make to bar her out of the kingdom. The button-makers, like other tradesmen and manufacturers who seek to make their government a kind of special providence for the protection of their pretended interests, appealed to all the influential powers of state to interpose in their behalf. Even as late as 1850 deputations were sent up to London, not to ask for Parliamentary legislation, but to solicit the royal court to patronize metal buttons. But, like the shoe-bucklemen, they found a power behind the throne that wielded the sceptre over the realm of taste, and like

them they had to say and believe that "Fashion is void of feeling and deaf to argument."

Still, there was a rough, rude world outside of civilization, which Fashion, enthroned at Paris, could not rule or reach for many years after the issue of her edicts. Ornamental buttons and beads of brass, glass, steel, and iron continued to be as attractive to the North American Indians, Hottentots, and Tartars as if they were worn by all ranks in London and New York. Thus, the fall in these trades was somewhat broken by the demand for those productions which was still kept up in the barbarous regions of the earth. Matthew Boulton, who may be called the father of half the trades of Birmingham, and who laid down that broad and strong foundation on which the business character of the town was built, developed those almost infinite varieties of handicraft which won for it the name of "toyshop of the world." For years before the American Revolution he erected his blocks of workshops at Soho, a suburb of Birmingham, then a wild and barren heath. In 1774 it had become the most extensive and remarkable establishment in England. In none before or since was there ever such a wonderful variety of articles wrought out simultaneously. At that time it employed a thousand workmen, who, from the unprecedented variety of skilled occupations they represented

and prosecuted, must have constituted a kind of normal school for artisans in all the other crafts subsequently introduced into the town. Indeed, Matthew Boulton and his copartners made Soho a kind of Mecca to Mechanism. From it has radiated a power which no mechanical dynamics can measure—a power which has taken rank with the great moral forces of mankind. When Boulton planted his establishment at Soho, water and wind were the only motive forces that propelled wheel or keel the world around. For years he propelled his machinery by water alone. Watt came with his great idea. He came to the right place and the right man; and the two, representing the best perceptive and executive faculties ever united in a private firm, worked out and gave to mankind that million-handed giant of the world, the Steam Engine. What is Mecca or a hundred Mahomets to that mechanical power for human progress and happiness! *Currens e Soho*, the steam engine was soon succeeded by another currency from the same establishment. The copper coinage of England up to Boulton's day had not only been coarse and common, but ununiform and uncertain. Boulton set at work to devise machinery for the manufacture of better pennies. He succeeded in producing them greatly improved in style and material; striking off twenty tons of copper, or 716,000 pennies a week

for several months. It is somewhat remarkable that, with all his nice perceptions of taste, he paid, voluntarily or involuntarily, the old hereditary English homage to SOLIDITY. He gave a Spartan size and weight to his coppers that vied well with the iron currency of Lycurgus. His penny weighed just an ounce, and his twopenny piece two ounces. Eight of the latter and sixteen of the former made just a pound. A sovereign's value in them made a comfortable load of fifteen pounds for a pair of saddle-bags. But their inconvenience as currency was compensated in other uses to which they might be turned. They were not only the most exact but the only uniform weights in the kingdom, and could be used more safely for the purchaser than any others in weighing out tea, snuff, tobacco, and even small family purchases of butter and cheese. Boulton fancied he had produced a coinage by his nice machinery which could not be imitated; but it was, in a few years, by lead pennies faced with copper. But if hypocrisy be a compliment to virtue, these counterfeits were almost a virtuous suggestion to truth. One might be tempted to believe that virtuous people acquiesced in the suggestion, especially if they had ever carried a shilling's worth of Boulton's pennies in their pockets up two flights of stairs, or a mile of level road. Whereas the genuine article was sixteen

to the pound, the counterfeit required sometimes more than eighty to make that weight.

Under Boulton, Watt, and Murdoch, Soho became an attracting and eradiating centre of scientific mechanism and artistic taste and skill, which not only supplied the manufacturing industries of Birmingham with their remarkable and diversified faculties, but diffused the overplusage throughout the kingdom and the world. Soho drew to itself and absorbed the best talent of the country. It attracted and employed the genius of Flaxman, Chantrey, and other eminent artists in designs for the almost infinite variety of articles which it produced. It trained up an army of workers under the tuition of all this science, genius, taste, and skill, and they, in their turn, became teachers of thousands of artisans in shops and factories scattered over the United Kingdom and the United States. Soho, also, as we have already noticed, elaborated a night sun for lighting the factories, shops, towns, and villages of the kingdom. It first gave to the world Gas as an illuminating power. Thus, considering all that has emanated from that famous establishment, its memory should be held in grateful estimation wherever the English language is spoken, and even where it is not.

While the Soho establishment was working out such marvels of taste, skill, and science in steel,

iron, copper, silver, and gold, another pioneer in the trades of Birmingham, Henry Clay, introduced what might be called a paper metal, and created an entirely new business, which may be regarded as the distinguishing speciality of the town. This was the *papier-machè*. He was an apprentice to John Baskerville, and had the best possible tuition for the enterprise he made so successful. He had the good fortune to win the patronage of the royal court by a sedan chair he presented to Queen Caroline. This probably was the largest and most splendid article he ever made of the new material. The demand for his manufactures became immense, and he accumulated a great property, and was appointed High Sheriff of Warwickshire. At one period, during the last century, he employed 300 hands. He had the monopoly of the market, and his profits must have satisfied the average ambition of monopolists. It is said they amounted to £3. 8*s*. 2*d*. on a single tray sold for £5. 8*s*. 9*d*. Improvements have been introduced from year to year since his day, until such heavy and solid articles have been produced as were seen at the Great Exhibition in Paris; or may be seem at any time at the warehouse of Messrs. M'Callum and Hodson, who are extensive manufacturers in Birmingham. Massive wardrobes, tables, sofas, &c., of the highest perfection will there be found,

showing to what uses and to what brilliant solidities the waste paper, often floating on the wind, may be turned.

The Glass Manufacture may also be called a speciality among the manifold productions of Birmingham. Two celebrated establishments, expanded to vast capacities by Messrs. Osler and the Messrs. Chance respectively, have carried the manufacture to wonderful perfection. The several international exhibitions that have taken place within the last sixteen years have made the public generally acquainted with the achievements of artistic mechanism and skilled labour which have distinguished different communities. At the Great Exhibition of 1851, it was seen, as never before, what Birmingham could do in the manufacture of glass. If the vote were taken of the million of different countries who saw what that first Crystal Palace contained, as to the most impressive, attractive, and best-remembered object, a majority would say that it was Osler's Crystal Fountain. It was a magnificent centre-piece for all the splendid surroundings of art and industry within those walls. It seemed a gorgeous stalactite from that concave sea of glass which gave translucent roofage to the great spectacle of human skill and toil. But that fairy fountain was only the beginning of productions which have excited equal admiration. One of the master-pieces of the

art is the pair of crystal glass candelabras which the Oslers manufactured for the tomb of the Prophet and for Ibrahim Pasha's palace at Cairo. This was perhaps their most exquisite specimen of workmanship, and was so unique and beautiful that Prince Albert commissioned them to manufacture a similar pair, on a smaller scale, as a birthday present to the Queen, which are placed in Osborne House. Perhaps no house has brought more science of its own elaboration to bear upon the construction of instruments for the measurement of wind and rain. These *anemometers* have been developed to the most delicate issues—even to register, as it were, every counter-puff of air by day and night; to tell when and how often the wind changed from one point to another. Their show-room on Broad Street is a veritable museum in itself, and no one can visit it without being struck with admiration at the infinite variety as well as beauty of their productions.

The Chances have the largest establishment in Great Britain for the manufacture of plate and window glass, lighthouse lenses, and optical glasses. Their works constitute a village in itself, a few miles out of Birmingham, at Spon Lane. No manufacture in England has shown more elasticity than glass on being released from the heavy duty once imposed upon it. It was almost like the case of a man born blind, who, on having his eyes

opened, luxuriated more in the sense of sight than in all the other senses put together. On removing the tax, not only all the houses in the kingdom seemed to open their old eyes wider than before, but also to show new ones in their faces. Window panes expanded from six inches by eight to six feet by eight, and grew on from that size to the dimensions of the front wall of a small cottage. Glass was put to uses never dreamt of before; even to purposes which it had been thought nothing but the toughness of iron could accomplish. First, small glass houses for flowers; then conservatories like that of Chatsworth; then the Crystal Palace in Hyde Park. Pillars, beams, and even globular boilers for boiling coffee have found their place among the new uses to which the brittlest of all materials has been turned. Any American, or other foreign-born visiter in Birmingham, will find the establishment of Messrs. Chance one of the great lions of English manufacturing enterprise.

The highest arts, or those which command the most enthusiastic and reverential admiration, are painting, sculpture, and music. And the triad had, beyond all other arts, the inspiration of religious sentiment and enthusiasm. The adoration of the Virgin and all the Roman Catholic saints, gave infinite scope and impetus to the genius of the great masters. Madonnas on canvas, glass, and in marble employed the pencils and chisels of the

first if not all of the painters and sculptors of Europe in the Middle Ages. Songs in honour of these human divinities were breathed into music by the great composers of that period. But when the Reformation laid its hand upon this sensuous worship, glass-painting became obsolete, if it had ever been introduced in England. Birmingham took a leading part in its *renaissance*, at the time when the genius of Baskerville, Boulton, and Soho was diffusing itself through the artistic industries of the town, and producing a simultaneity of progress in them all. In 1784 Francis Egerton first began to paint glass at Soho, and brought the art to such perfection that he was commissioned even to supply windows for the famous St. George's Chapel, Windsor; also for Lichfield and Salisbury cathedrals, for several of the colleges of Oxford, and for many parish churches in different parts of the country. That showy and luxurious Lord Mayor of London, William Beckford, gave him commissions to the value of £12,000 for windows for his Fonthill mansion. A specimen of the genius and workmanship of this pioneer in the art may be seen in the east window of St. Paul's, Birmingham. It may not stand scientific criticism, but may serve as a point of departure from which his successors progressed to higher attainments. The most eminent of these was Mr. John Hardman, who, in 1837, formed an intimate acquaintance with

the celebrated architect and designer, Augustus Welby Pugin, an enthusiastic devotee and student of the decorative art. Indeed, he seemed to have espoused the Roman Catholic faith in middle-life more out of his admiration for saints in glass than for any other religious convictions. One designed and the other executed seemingly with the same class and capacity of genius. Painted windows, of every device, form, and size, for cathedrals, colleges, churches, and private mansions under this firm became one of the special manufactures of Birmingham. The establishment of the Hardmans is on Newhall Hill, and is well worth a visit, not only for its beautiful productions but for its prominent place in the history of the art in England.

Messrs. Lloyd and Summerfield, at Birmingham Heath, have also distinguished themselves for the splendid specimens of glass-painting which they have produced.

But of all the manufactures of Birmingham none has such a wide reputation abroad, in America especially, as Gillott's STEEL PENS. Happily there are a hundred "young ideas taught to shoot" with a pen where one is taught to shoot with a gun. Pens are the knitting needles of civilization, and ply in all its webs of social life and literature. They are the metallic points from which flash the electric thoughts that thrill the world, and conduct the first that children write into visible words.

The schoolmasters of two hemispheres owe Gillott a debt of gratitude which they do not realize for what he has done for them. I once taught school for a year, and from my own experience should estimate the hours then employed by American schoolmasters in slitting and pointing goose-quills with their penknives in a single year would make a century. The very term "penknife" will probably be perpetuated for ever as a memento of a process that did sorely try thousands of patient and virtuous souls employed in teaching children to write. Indeed, the invention of the steel pen was an absolute necessity, as much as was the use of pit coal in England when first discovered. As well might you expect to feed all the house-fires, furnaces, and forges of the kingdom with wood fuel grown on the island as to find goose-quills enough on the face of the globe to furnish the writing world with pens. And the cutlers of Sheffield had got on a little further into the light of political economy than to follow the example of some stiff protectionists we have noticed, or to appeal to Parliament or the Prince of Wales to put a stop to Gillott's steel pens which could be made without Sheffield penknives. Even if they at first regarded him as a poacher on their preserves, the man who acted for him as guide was a Sheffield artisan, who made the first steel pen. It was a rude thing at first, being made on

the fork principle. The two tines were flat and thin, and the points when brought closely together formed the "nib." The whole was made to resemble a quill pen in shape, and was gradually developed into a beautiful but expensive article. Some of the most highly finished were sold as high as five shillings each. They were generally purchased as presents or articles of curious mechanism, but were too few and costly for any considerable use. There was at that time no town in England that had developed such varied machinery for such purposes as Birmingham, and the making of pens became a speciality which perhaps has characterized the town more distinctively abroad than any other manufacture. At first the use of them encountered an obstinate prejudice, like the introduction of most useful articles. In fact the school-house door had to be carried at the point of the pen itself by a few teachers brave enough to lead the storming party against this prejudice. First and foremost and bravest of them all was Mr. James Perry, founder or patron of the Perryian system of education. He was supplied with excellent pens by Mr. Josiah Mason, who was a pioneer in their introduction to the public. But at this time they were very expensive, being sold at a shilling each by the dozen. Their use and manufacture progressed very slowly both from the prejudice against such

an innovation and from the increased expense involved. So late as 1839 they were almost unknown to the general public, but in the following ten years they arose to an important place among the manufactures of the town. They were made in eighteen different establishments, all under the pressure of mutual competition to introduce improvements in form and facility of production. The number of manufacturers is now twelve, but the quantity made "for home and exportation" is simply prodigious. It amounts to over 14,000,000 of pens a week. There are 360 men and about 2,000 women and girls employed, and about ten tons of steel used weekly in producing these "small arms" of literature, business, and social intercourse.

It is doubtful if any article of such wide and almost universal use ever was so identified with one man's name as is the steel pen with Joseph Gillott, of Birmingham. Even the pens manufactured by others sent abroad there suggests his name and fame. In ten thousand school-houses scattered over the American continent between the two oceans, a million children are as familiarly acquainted with Joseph Gillott as with Noah Webster. The primer of the one and the pen of the other—twin pioneers of civilization—are making the tour of the western hemisphere together, and leaving behind them a wave and wake of light.

Gillott's Manufactory is a kind of central celebrity in Birmingham to visitèrs from America and other countries. Independent of the associations we have noticed, it is well worth a visit for its quiet order, neatness, comfort, and even elegance as a manufacturing establishment. The show-room is really a museum of the art, filled and embellished by an infinite variety of specimens of the utmost perfection. There are pens so large that they seem to be made for giants, or for common men to hold in both hands when writing, as one holds a hoe handle. Then there are others so minute, that it requires a magnifying glass to see the slit and point. Between the two extremes range gradations in size and varieties in form which may be counted by the hundreds. Shields, stars, flowers, and various pictures are exquisitely formed out of these varieties, in which nearly all the tints of the rainbow have their place and play. Then the process of manufacture at every stage is represented. First is the strip of plain sheet-steel as it comes from Sheffield. Then you have the pen when it has passed through the entire "freedom of the press." The first operation cuts out the form, another slits, another tubes it, and another passes it on to a fifth process. Thus at a glance your eye follows it through these processes, from the riddled sheet of steel to the tempering furnace, thence

to the emery-wheel, and to the last touch that is given to it.

To show what improved machinery has done to cheapen and multiply their production, it may suffice to say, that pens that were sold at wholesale thirty years ago at five shillings a gross are now sold as low as a halfpenny per gross, or two dozen for a single farthing! The Birmingham pen-makers are beginning to encounter considerable competition in the foreign market from manufactories recently established in the United States, in France, and Germany. But there is room for all, and there will be plenty of business for them when the paternal authorities of states, towns, and villages shall make the necessary provision, and then insist that every child shall learn to write before it goes to field or factory. If any men have a large and direct interest in compulsory education and world-wide civilization they are the makers of metallic pens.

Although Gillott's Pen Factory is the great lion of Birmingham manufacturers to Americans visiting the town from their childhood associations with his pens, there is another which excites their special admiration when they visit it. This is the famous Electro-Plate establishment of Elkington and Co., which, with its affiliations or branch dépôts, is the most extensive in Great Britain. They may be considered the very fathers

or founders of this splendid ware, which cheapens, to the means and use of middle-class men, articles of elegance and luxury which great wealth alone could once command. In 1836 they first invented or developed the process by which metals could be coated with a solution of silver or gold. For this very important and remarkable invention they obtained a patent both in England and France; and in the latter country it was considered a great contribution to science as well as to artistic and useful industry. The establishment is, in itself, a school of art, in which genius is trained to the finest conceptions of taste and beauty. No one can estimate the force and extent of influence it puts forth for the culture of a nation. One might as easily count the rays emitted from a Bude light and measure their length, as to measure the reach and result of that influence upon society. Here are more than "apples of gold in pictures of silver;" here are the trees that bear both, and the leaves that guard and garnish them, all done to Nature's best truth, life, and beauty. Here are her most exquisite ferns with their crinkly foliage in tracery as delicate as she herself could work. Here are the master-thoughts and master-touches of artistic genius in designs of infinite variety. Here is thirty years' growth of the productions of that genius, in patterns of gold and silver work,

shaped to all the varying tastes and fashions of the world of luxury and wealth. Not that luxury or wealth has in itself the mental power to originate these tasteful designs, but the mind to appreciate and means to enjoy them when produced by that high art which would have starved in the sackcloth of mediocrity in all ages, had it not been for the favoured few who could reward the divinest conceptions and the finest touches of the painter or sculptor. How it would have astonished good Queen Bess and her court and courtiers if they could have seen what wares Wedgwood and the Elkingtons would bring within the reach and daily use of the common people! We could fancy she would have involuntarily put one hand to her throne and the other to her crown to steady them, if she could have seen the mechanics of the kingdom drinking their beer out of Wedgwood's pottery instead of their cow-horn mugs. But when she came to see small tradesmen drinking tea or coffee instead of beer and pouring it into china cups from Elkington's silver-faced tea-pots, she must have believed the world coming to an end. This *popularizing* of art and taste is perhaps the most distinctive characteristic of the present age. In some directions and respects it has outrun the diffusion of other branches of popular education. There are thousands of beer-drinkers who handle

Wedgwood's ware, and tea-drinkers who can see Elkington's best tea-pots, and are yet unable to read the shortest syllables of the language they speak. But multitudes even of these feel their minds illuminated to new perceptions of refining taste as they look admiringly upon these beautiful productions of genius and art; and if they cannot decorate their shelves with them, they can and do paint their cottage windows with the sweet sheen of living flowers. Thus any one, who appreciates at their true value these self-diffusing and cultivating influences, will see in such an establishment as Elkington and Co.'s something more than the finest specimens of gold and silverware. As regards the productions of these articles it is unrivalled in Great Britain, and only surpassed in extent by one establishment in France.

It may indicate the amount of raw material which is worked into an infinite variety of articles by this establishment to state one or two facts connected with the process. There are four coating vats, each of which deposits twenty-four ounces of silver per hour, and a fifth that deposits twelve ounces. As they work ten hours a day, the daily amount of silver thus fused and diffused is 1,080 ounces, or sixty-seven and a-half pounds avoirdupois, or about 400 pounds a week. About one-third of this amount is the weight of gold deposited on various wares in the same way. Allowing five

working days to the week, then this establishment must work up 17,555 pounds of silver, and an amount of gold of equal value in a year. And, what is a fact of great importance, every ounce of this silver and gold is lost to the world. It is doubtful if a pound's weight of all the tons which the manufactory has solved and deposited has been saved to be used over again for any purpose whatever. The silver or gold coating is worn away and disappears in the course of years. The same is the case with all the gold-beaters of the world. The acres of gold-leaf they hammer out for gilt work are all lost, as much as the sunshine of a past year.

About 1,000 persons are employed in the establishment, who probably represent as much highly-trained genius and skill as was ever brought together under the same roofage. First in the high art department stands M. Morel Ladeuil, a pupil of the celebrated Antoine Vechte. This distinguished artist in *repoussé* or *raised* work has attained an eminence which has often been recognized and honoured. He received a gold medal at the Paris Exhibition for specimens of exquisite conception and execution. It will serve to give some approximate idea of the amount of labour bestowed on some of the specimens of this raised work to examine one exhibited at the Messrs. Elkington and Co.'s. It is a silver vase, which will

hold, perhaps, a quart. On its external surface are represented all the leading inventions of the century, in all the allegorical metaphors and symbols that were wont to delight the classical imaginations of ancient times. These figures are all *raised* from the inside and finished with exquisite delicacy. The amount of labour bestowed upon that single article cost £600, and it must rank among the master-pieces of art. It would be natural for nine persons in ten, who are acquainted with electro-plate ware, to conclude that it is merely washed or coated with silver, which coat can no more be removed from it entire than a coat of paint from a deal board. But on visiting this establishment, one sees the most elaborate and artistic article made throughout and entire by this dipping or washing process. The solution of silver or gold is poured into or against a mould, of which every figure, line, and point, however delicate, is reproduced with photographic fulness and fidelity.

The educational system by which this great establishment is supplied with reproductive skill and genius may be inferred from the fact, that fifty or sixty of the young men attend the evening classes in the Midland Institute, and take such lessons in design and in the application of science to the different branches of the manufacture as shall fit them for its highest grades of art. Thus, there are nearly 1,000 persons not only engaged in

the production of these various and splendid articles, but comprising a kind of normal school for the training of teachers in the arts embraced in the manufacture.

In ascending to the show-room, one passes between two files of bronze statues drawn up on either side, which represent the perfection of bronze work, which makes an important department of the productions exhibited. Here stand crusading knights in their armour, statesmen, and many of the great masters of their day and generation. The most liberal and generous rule is adopted in making this show-room and the whole establishment accessible to all who wish to visit it. Such persons are conducted through the gorgeous hall and shown all they wish to see with an affable attention and courtesy which all will remember who have shared them. This policy pays well in sales as well as in the satisfaction it gives to all parties. On counting the names entered in the visiters' book, about one-fourth of the whole will be found to be American. Many persons on that side of the Atlantic, who may read these pages, will bear testimony to these characteristics of the establishment.

Another speciality of Birmingham manufactures is the Iron Bedstead. The invention of this article is attributed to Dr. Church, and was one of several he elaborated, like hundreds of other inventors, to his own impoverishment and to the enriching of

many fortunate men who availed themselves cheaply of his genius. When he had spent his best years upon the development of these discoveries, a relative or friend invited him to a home in America, where he ended his days, little remembered for all his contributions to the benefit of his kind. Those of our readers who visited the Great Exhibition in Paris may easily form some approximate idea of the perfection to which iron bedsteads have been brought by remembering what a splendid show of them was produced by Messrs. Winfield and Co., the most extensive manufacturers in Birmingham. There was one especially that excited much admiration for its rich and elaborate design—a bedstead which Solomon in all his glory or any modern sovereign might have coveted. In the course of fifteen years the production of these bedsteads in Birmingham has increased tenfold; or from about 400 weekly in 1850 to about 5,000 in 1865. The high duty levied upon them, even before the Civil War, has kept them virtually out of the United States, but a large and increasing demand from Australia, Canada, and other British colonies, as well as several foreign states, stimulates and extends the production of these convenient and economical articles of furniture. The retail price of them varies from £10 to 10*s.* each, according to the size and style. A good double-bedded stead may be bought for a guinea.

The making of Pins was commenced in Birmingham more than a century ago. Up to 1824, they were all made by hand; and so minutely was the labour on them divided that fourteen persons were employed in performing all the manipulations requisite for perfecting one. In that year an American inventor by the name of Wright elaborated a machine, and patented it in England, which would take in the wire from a reel at one end and turned out a full-made pin at the other. Or that was the aim and intent of the inventor, though a great deal of time and vast sums of money were expended on the machine to bring it to this productive capacity. To this machine succeeded an apparatus for sticking the pins when made and for folding the wrappers. The leading establishment in Birmingham for their manufacture is that of Messrs. Edelsten and Williams, who also produce vast quantities of hair-pins, hooks and eyes, thimbles, eyelets, and a great variety of other articles of brass and steel wire.

We have left to the last place in our notice of the special industries the manufacture of Small Arms for war upon men, beasts, and birds. After all that the town has done in the production of pens, pins, buttons, thimbles, hoes, shovels, and other useful tools, it is widest if not best known to the outside world for these varied and ingenious weapons of death. For naturally the largest por-

tion of the great human family are unable to use pens, but are trained to the handling of these shooting and stabbing irons used in great and small wars, and in manly recreations in cruelty to animals. The musket, sporting gun, and rifle have come to their present character by an inverse process and development. They have grown down and from the monster-mouthed cannon, instead of the cannon growing up from them into its huge dimensions. The cannon is said to have been made first in the middle of the fourteenth century at Liege, a town that armed half of Europe for several centuries with all sorts of weapons and armour against weapons. It was a huge, rude machine for shooting large stones at an enemy. They were first used by the English against the Scots in 1327, and by them against the French at the battle of Cressy, in 1346. It is stated that some of them were large enough to discharge a mass of stones weighing 1,200 pounds. They were great tubes of iron plates hooped together by large iron rings "shrunk on" when hot. The first we read of a hand-gun is in 1471, when Edward IV landed with 300 Flemings, armed with the miniature cannon, which the Germans had elaborated to a considerable capacity of mischief. It varied, however, but little from the cannon except in size. It was a simple barrel, mounted on a straight stock, with an uncovered

touch-hole at the top, just like its great ugly prototype. It was fired from a rest by a match, so that the whole process was like that of a modern park of artillery in action. The furthest reach of the next improvement was to bend the stock at the breech. The inventive genius was busy at the machine, and next produced the match-lock, which probably enabled the gun to be used on rainy days. But the carrying of lighted matches about among so much loose powder led to frequent and fatal accidents. They often touched off the powder-horn or powder-cask instead of the loaded gun. It was a long and protracted struggle of the genius of the day to obviate this difficulty, and to generate the requisite spark where and when it was wanted. Finally, a flint or bit of firestone was fixed opposite the touch-hole, and a file chained to the gun, and a little rubbing with this produced the ignition. During the next two centuries another improvement was effected. Instead of the file, a spring steel wheel was so attached as to be set whizzing against the flint by touching a trigger. This was the best contrivance developed up to the reign of Charles II. The scarcity and expense of powder, and the awkwardness of the guns, limited the use of fire-arms, so that in Elizabeth's reign the bow and arrow were the principal weapon of the English army. Another cause may be ascribed

for this slow introduction of them. To ward off the balls, the soldiers so cased themselves in iron armour that they were not only protected against the shot themselves, but disabled from injuring the enemy by the weight they carried. Still, as there was more genius brought to bear on the sword than the ploughshare, other improvements were made in different parts of Europe, and called after the towns in which they were invented. And some of these followed the *decrescendo* rule, which quite reversed the Irishman's idea, who said he had known a certain gun ever since it was a pocket-pistol. This miniature musket was first brought out in an Italian town called Pistoja, and was named the *pistol* after the place of its birth. The *bayonet* was first made in 1640 at Bayonne, and assumed the name of that town. It was first used as a simple dagger or poignard fixed in a wooden handle, which was fitted into the muzzle of the gun, so that no shooting could be carried on while it was used; and the gun became a simple pike for the time being. The French got the start in the improvement of the fixture; for when, in the reign of William III, they encountered an English force, they halted on the charge within a few paces of the regiment, and, with bayonets fixed by a socket *over* the muzzles of their guns, poured in a volley upon the enemy, who were as greatly astonished as if

it had come with all its smoke from wooden crossbows. About 1690 the flint lock was invented, it is supposed, by the Dutch, and continued in use, with slight alteration, until the last quarter of a century. In 1807 the Rev. Mr. Forsyth obtained a patent for the application of fulminating powder to the discharging of loaded guns. But his "application" was not so successful to a charge of gunpowder as to the points of a sermon; and it was not until 1816 that the copper cap was invented. Still this improvement was not introduced into the English military service until 1839.

The *rifle* comes down with a long history of improvements. The common gun-barrel was grooved towards the last of the fifteenth century; the first specimen being produced at Vienna. In 1620, Koster, of Nuremburg, gave the grooves a twist in order to produce a rotary motion to the ball. During the next century, the grooved musket or rifle came into a somewhat extensive use by several continental powers, but not by the English until the war of the American Revolution. Up to within fifteen years the use of the rifle was much limited by the time and care required to ram the ball home when incased in a patch of leather. For the space of forty years, much ingenuity was exercised in different countries to overcome this difficulty. M. Delvigne,

a French officer, in 1826, proposed to use a loosely-fitting ball such as is adapted to a smooth bore, and to expand it over the powder by a few smart blows of the ramrod. But this expedient did not answer the purpose. In 1836, Mr. Greener, of Birmingham, constructed a self-expanding ball by leaving an opening in it for the insertion of a plug of a harder metal, which forced out the lead at the explosion. This operation gave the ball a distorted or irregular form on leaving the barrel. In 1849, Colonel Thouvenin invented the Vincennes carbine, with a steel pin or stem at the bottom of the barrel which reached above the powder. The loose ball being forced upon this by several blows of the ramrod, was expanded to hug the grooves closely, and, to a good degree, accomplished the sought-for object. Captain Minié produced the improvement which bears his name. He removed the steel pin or stem and substituted a bullet hollow at the back, to which the explosion gave the necessary lateral expansion. Breech-loaders have now been brought into almost general use in England, both as sporting and military guns. The name of Westley Richards is well known in America, as well as in remoter countries, for his rifles and other fire-arms. His list of patrons embraces a great number of the English nobility and gentry, and his brand stands at the very

head of high reputation for excellence. The Greeners also turn out sporting guns of great perfection. The wood stock-forms are brought mostly from countries where wood is more abundant and cheaper than in England. The walnut stocks are imported from Germany and Italy. During the Crimean war, a Birmingham contractor set up saw-mills at Turin, and has converted a whole forest, or nearly 100,000 walnut trees into stocks.

There are nearly 600 manufacturers in Birmingham engaged in different departments of the gun trade, which departments are eight in number, and some of these are again subdivided. There are about 10,000 men, women, and children employed in these different branches. Good workmen can earn, on an average, thirty shillings a-week. Gun-making by machinery, after the American process, has been introduced quite lately. In 1853, Mr. Whitworth and Mr. George Wallis, of Birmingham, were members of a commission sent to the United States to visit our private and national establishments. As the result of their report, the English Government resolved to erect a manufactory at Enfield, on the same system as that pursued at Springfield. A second commission was sent over, consisting of military officers, to purchase such machinery and models as were necessary for the Enfield factory. The most wonderful and in-

genious of all our labour-saving machines to the English generally, were our lathes for turning crooked things, like lasts, axe-handles, and ox-bows; and which produced gun stocks to such perfection, and so cheaply and speedily. The interchangeable principle was also appreciated at its true value, by which any part of one lock or gun would exactly fit any other. The report of this commission expresses their wonder and admiration at our process of effecting this in the following words:

"They selected, with Colonel Ripley's permission, ten muskets, each made in a different year, viz., from 1844 to 1853 inclusive, from the principal arsenal at Springfield, which they caused to be taken to pieces in their presence and the parts placed in a row of boxes mixed up together. They then requested the workman whose duty it is to 'assemble' the arms, to put them together, which he did, the committee handing him the parts taken at hazard, with the use of a turnscrew only, and as quickly as though they had been English muskets, whose parts had been carefully kept separate."

On the return of this committee the Enfield works were pushed into extensive operation, especially under the pressure of the Crimean war. The establishment is arranged to turn out 2,000 guns per week. The Birmingham gun-makers were stirred up to somewhat indignant emotion at this Government competition and interference in their trade; but as they could not put down the Enfield factory, they formed a large and powerful joint-

stock company, which has not only been able to compete successfully with the Government, but also to perform work which Enfield could not execute for want of productive capacity. The factory of the Birmingham Small-Arms Company is situated on the Great Western Railway, a few miles out of the town, and will well repay a visit. To an American it presents not only interesting features but facts in mechanical history. He will see there in operation the genius of his own country, and recognize an instalment of his country's debt paid back to Birmingham for all our skilled mechanics and manufacturers have derived from the establishments of Boulton and Watt, and other generating centres of ingenious industry. The American system has not only been introduced here, but the factory was launched into operation under American direction. The late Mr. Corey M'Farland, so well known in Springfield, brought to this establishment all the mechanical genius and long experience for which he was so much valued at home. His sad and untimely death was felt nearly as deeply in Birmingham as in Springfield.

The total number of gun-barrels proved in England from 1855 to 1864 was 6,116,305; making an average annual production of 611,630. To show the proportion that Birmingham contributes to this production, the fact will suffice, that in the same period of ten years, 3,277,815 barrels were

proved in this town, giving an annual average of 327,781. An elaborate and exhaustive paper by J. D. Goodman, Esq., the Chairman of the Birmingham Small-Arms Company, which may be found in Mr. Timmins's great work already cited, will supply any one wishing it the most minute and extensive information on the rise and progress of a manufacture which has given the town such a world-wide reputation.

We have now noticed at some length what may be called the manufacturing *specialities* of Birmingham. It is not the object of this volume, nor would half-a-dozen of the same size be sufficient, to describe those numerous trades which it carries on in common with other large towns in the kingdom. I have sought to impress especially upon the American reader the importance of the place which Birmingham has occupied as a normal school for the artistic, scientific, and skilled industries of the world; as a generating centre of mechanical genius to which no foreign country is so much indebted as the United States. Here is the birth-place of the first Great Exhibition of 1851, and all the International Exhibitions that followed it are the grandchildren and great-grandchildren of the Birmingham Industrial Exhibition in 1849. It was here that Prince Albert not only got the idea but practically the model of what was produced in the Crystal Palace in Hyde

Park. Such an aggregation of mechanical productions was unknown until it was presented in Birmingham, as a kind of outside illustration of the arts and sciences discussed in the British Association which met that year in the town. It was a display on such a large scale of what the Midland District and its metropolis could do, and embraced such a number and variety of specimens, that the most original feature of the Exhibition of 1851 was the building and not its contents.

## CHAPTER VIII.

THE BLACK COUNTRY IN DETAIL; ITS CHIEF TOWNS AND CENTRES OF INDUSTRY—DUDLEY, STOURBRIDGE, AND HAGLEY.

HAVING thus given half this volume to a notice of Birmingham, too small a space remains for a description of The Black Country proper, of which it is the metropolis. Doubtless a majority of our English readers have passed through this remarkable district once in their lives, and remember its most striking features. To such any portraiture of it which the most graphic pen could give might be superfluous. But there is one aspect of it which I doubt if half-a-dozen of them ever witnessed; and that I would earnestly commend to their notice.

I had passed through the district on the railway many times by night and day, in summer and winter, during the past twenty years, and had seen it in all the various aspects of the changing seasons. But there was one point of view which I had never enjoyed, and which is the best that can be found

in the whole region. This is the tower of Dudley Castle by night. So, having induced Edward Capern, R.P.P., or Rural Postman Poet, to accompany me, with the hope that the scene would stir his muse, and that I might walk in the wake of its inspiration, we took the train for Dudley about sunset, in order to be at the Castle just as "the darkness falls from the wings of night" upon its grey and broken walls. Those lofty and red-tipped wings were dropping it pretty fast as we reached the closed gates, which did not admit people at that late hour. Still, under the gentle persuasion of our importunity, commended to the janitor's heart by the silver accents of a shilling or two, the iron wicket turned inward for us. We ascended half-way up the thickly-wooded steep to a little unique cottage made out of one of the small out-buildings of the Castle, where an aged couple, with their daughter, get up teas and bread and butter for visiters, or furnish hot water for parties *a la pic nic*. The daughter was away when we knocked at the door, and the old people were not a little surprised at a call so late in the evening. Besides, the old lady was confined to her arm-chair in the chimney-corner with "rheumaticks," and other ailments, which she described in a pathetic voice, and seemed to wonder that she should be affected by such ills at only seventy-eight. To have tea in this little cottage under the haw-

thorns, before going up to the night scenery from the Castle tower, was put prominently in our programme, and we encouraged the old man to believe he could get it up for us without his daughter's help, or at least with ours. So we set to work, each doing his part. I manned the toasting-fork, and did the several halves of a couple of muffins in capital style. Capern took to the little black tea-pot and charged it appropriately for two, the old woman throwing in a timely suggestion as to quantity. So we drew up to the little round table before the fire, and had as genial a tea as ever two men enjoyed. All the surroundings were just of the right kind to season the meal with a happy relish. The two small yellow candles and the fire-light filled the low-ceiled room with that bland mixture of illuminated darkness so well suited to stories and snatches of legendary lore.

After our tea in the cottage, we ascended to "where the Castle holds its state" in the gray silence of a grand ruin. We first passed through the deep, massive archway, with its double port-cullis, into the green court-yard, to look first at the brave old monument of past centuries and feel or imagine the presence of their spirits revisiting it. And it were well worth such a visit if they were permitted to come back again to the scenes of long ago. As we walked up and down the irregular line of the structure, and

heard the echo of our footsteps running in and out of the ruined halls and climbing the winding stairways of the broken towers, we really felt the shadow of an august presence above and around; as if the mighty Past stood before us fresh in its weeds from the funeral of five hundred years. A cold skylight paned the glassless windows of the banquet hall, and shadows of waving tree-branches waltzed up and down within the roofless walls of that *salon* where "brave men and fair women" met in dance when Elizabeth was queen. Passing on towards the great gateway, we stopped before the chapel of the Castle to catch a striking feature. The passing moon was looking into the great window like a broad human face whose smile was light. It was a serene and genial smile, as of one who looks upon a cradle, not a grave; or as of one visiting the trysting-place of happy memories. At least ten thousand Pater Nosters a century had been chaunted or said within those walls, and other invocations and voices of devotion, when that same moon looked in through windows alive with painted images of all the saints.

Having thus communed awhile with the Past, where the castle walls shut away the living Present from the view, we ascended the citadel, or lofty donjon tower, planted upon the highest cliff of the mountainous ridge. The old man of the

cottage led the way, and we followed with wary feet, guided by the sense of feeling rather than sight. As we mounted the deep-worn, winding steps, hugging closely the circular wall, at each story a red cross of dull fire-light seemed to be hung up before us as a guidepost to the dark and narrow way. Ascending a step or two, we found it was a slit in the tower for the arrow-men of the olden time, which was now filled with the illumination of the outside world. Winding around several times in the spiral ascent, we caught several sudden peeps of the scenery through these cross-shaped arrow-ports. These stairway glances north, east, south, and west served to sharpen the appetite of our eyes for the grand panorama that burst upon us as we stepped out upon the parapet of the tower. My first thought was of Longfellow as I looked off into the splendid vista—that he might stand on that tower

> "At midnight,
> As the clocks were striking the hour."

If one furnace glowing "redder than the moon" behind the old church tower of East Cambridge, as he stood on Charles River Bridge, so impressed his muse, to what inspiration would it have been moved by this sight? I hope he may see it before he dies as we saw it on that night. Some poet,

and the best of a nation, should put his genius under the influence of that magnificent spectacle for the space of half an hour. The theme would well befit the laureate of England at the best moments of his inspiration. In figures beyond my prosaic conception, he would describe a scene which cannot be paralleled on the globe. For an unpoetical man like myself, it is difficult to get hold of similes which would enable the reader to picture the scene in his mind. A writer of a military turn of fancy might say that it was the sublimest battle-scene ever enacted on earth; that ten thousand Titans were essaying to breach heaven with a thousand mortars, each charged with a small red-hot hill. It might look like that not only to General Grant or Sherman, but even to men who never wore a sword. There was an embattled amphitheatre of twenty miles span ridged to the purple clouds. Planted at artillery intervals on this encircling ridge, and at musket-shot spaces in the dark valley between, a thousand batteries, mounted with huge ordnance, white at the mouth with the fury of the bombardment, were pouring their cross-fires of shot and shell into the cloud-works of the lower heavens. Wolverhampton, on the extreme left, stood by her black mortars which shot their red volleys into the night. Coseley and Bilston and Wednesbury replied bomb for bomb, and set the clouds on fire above with their

lighted matches. Dudley, Oldbury, Albion, and Smethwick, on the right, plied their heavy breachers at the iron-works on the other side; while West Bromwich and distant Walsall showed that their men were standing as bravely to their guns, and that their guns were charged to the muzzle with the grape and canister of the mine. The canals twisting and crossing through the field of battle, showed by patches in the light like bleeding veins. There were no clouds except of smoke over the scene; but there were large strips of darkness floating with crimson fringes into the red sea, on which the white moon rode like an ermined angel of peace.

For all that glowing empire was peace. Peace has her battle-fields as well as war, and this was her Waterloo. Here she had mustered fifty regiments of her swart veterans, armed with all the weapons of her exhaustless arsenal—with Minié picks and Schneider hammers, and file-edged swords that cut at their sides. Those great-mouthed mortars, belching forth globes of fire, were her huge muzzle-loaders. And all this was the thick of one of her great battles by night—only one of the three hundred a year she fights in that dark valley with the elements. What are all the mines and counter-mines of war compared with the hundreds her sappers have dug fifty fathoms below the visible surface of this battle

scene! Where or when did war ever dig such deep trenches or fill them with such battalions, or bring its land and sea forces into action with such united and concentrated power! Here were 10,000 pickmen sending up from holds, 500 feet deep, cartridges for loading the cupola cannon that were reddening the night with their blaze. Here were the deck or surface brigades standing to their batteries, and making each look like the old picture of "The Defence of Gibraltar." There were the Brades Works at the right centre of the line, discharging a thousand spades, hoes, trowels, and pruning-hooks an hour. Further down toward Birmingham there was a well-manned battery that poured forth a shower of bolts and nuts; and Chance's great fortress was all ablaze, with its hot fountains sending out acres of glass to be parcelled into panes of every size. To the right of us, to the left and front of us, the whole amphitheatre was in close action, working out for the world the thousand small arms of peace—cotton hoes for Brazil and harpoons for Behring's Straits, and, for all the countries between, every tool used in honest labour.

The moon rode up with its bland face a little flushed over the scene, and the whole heavens were suffused with the red illumination, as if in honour of human industry. Then at that moment all the church bells of Dudley sent forth a shower of

mirthful music, which pattered like silver rain against the purple garments of the night; and the widest streets and the market-place of the town were doubly lighted, while the home-stars of all the houses up to the dark hill-tops, looked like so many constellations, grouped like those we everywhere see by night. It was a scene worthy of a great poet's inspiration, and I hope his pen will some day do better justice to it than mine has done.

Dudley Castle needs only a pen like Sir Walter Scott's to make it famous. For full five hundred years it was inhabited by lords and ladies whose lives and characters might have supplied matter, doubtless, for twenty novels, with facts enough for the web of imagination to be fastened to. But it has never figured in romantic literature; so not one in a hundred of the visiters at Kenilworth ever walks about the walls of this grand old structure. As a fighting castle, it hardly had an equal in England for its commanding elevation and massive walls and towers. Then it meant living as well as fighting; and though it never showed such a palace frontage as Kenilworth, its banquet and other halls, and all its rough, gray storeys, must have commanded a view which few castles in the kingdom could surpass. Standing on the great donjon tower, especially at night, and looking off upon the surrounding scenery, even a sober imagination

might fancy the castellated ridge was Mount Olympus, and that the only god at home was Vulcan. The ancients could not have conceived of a more proper throne for the great deity of the hammer. The little fore-shortened mountain wooded from the level fields below to the tops of the walls, is just high enough for the dais of the throne. Then the whole height looks as if a hundred Cyclops had been mining, counter-mining, and undermining it with caverns, half of which have fallen in, leaving gullies and gorges one hundred feet deep, all overgrown with tall trees, showing how long ago the roofage broke down. The winding walks around these green precipices and huge caverns all favour the fancy of Vulcan's throne. Then there is another coincidence that gives the aspect of real fact to the illusion. The Earl of Dudley, who owns the Castle and nearly all that can be seen from it with the naked eye, is a veritable Vulcan in himself. He not only owns many of the coal and iron mines of the district, but is one of the most extensive iron-workers in South Staffordshire. And it is a distinctive peculiarity of his Vulcanic operations, that he works his own minerals exclusively and only. The iron ore, coal, and lime are all his own, taken from his own estates. He entered upon this field of enterprise only about ten years ago, when the iron trade of the district had considerably deteriorated in conse-

quence of a deflection in the quality of the iron produced. With his unlimited capital, and all the machinery and other means it could command, he raised the standard and recovered the prestige, producing an article which brought a higher price than any other branded house in the district realizes. It is a token of a very interesting industrial copartnership or connexion to see a large invoice of iron to an edge-tool-making company in a Massachusetts village, bearing the name and arms of "The Earl of Dudley" as manufacturer. It conveys a good, healthy suggestion, that one of the very wealthiest noblemen in England supplies the hammers of a New England axe factory from his own mines and furnaces worked by himself. And no better test could be applied to the quality of the iron he manufactures than its exclusive use by the Douglas Edge Tool Manufacturing Company in Massachusetts, which probably turns out the best implements of the kind to be found in the world.

This personal connexion with the manufacture of iron is not only laudable but legitimate in the Earl of Dudley. For it runs in the family back to the beginning of the seventeenth century. An illegitimate or half-son of one of the fast and prodigal representatives of the house distinguished himself by the active and successful interest he took in the great industry of the district. His name was Dud Dudley. He had a good deal of the

speculative and inventive genius of the celebrated Marquis of Worcester, who was a kind of seer of science in his day. He wrote a book on the subject of coal and iron and other metals, with the title of "Metallum Martis," a work full of quaint and clever thoughts. Up to his day, charcoal alone had been used in smelting iron ore, and in the working of iron in all the forges and smithies in the kingdom. The wood of the country was fast disappearing under this great drain, and he assigns a patriotic motive as the strongest that operated upon his mind in developing another species of fuel to save the ship timber, so essential to the nation's defence. He says that when he set his hand to this new enterprise there were nearly 20,000 smiths of all sorts, and many iron-works decayed for want of wood within ten miles of Dudley Castle. As the history of making iron with pit-coal is of such deep interest to all countries, and as the narrative of Dud Dudley, who was an energetic pioneer in the work, is so succinct and graphic, we copy out the following from his "Metallum Martis," a work reproduced with great care and effort by John N. Bagnall, Esq., of West Bromwich, in 1854:

"King James, His Sacred Majesty's Grandfather, and Prince Henry, for the preservation of Wood and Timber in this Island, did in the 9nth year of His Reign, Grant His Letters Pattents of Priviledge unto Simon Sturtevant, Esq., for 31 years, for the making

of Iron with Pit-cole and Sea-cole for the Preservation of Wood and Timber of Great Brittain so greatly then consumed by Iron-works; This Invention was by King James' command to be at large put in Print, which Book did contain near a quire of paper in quarto, called *Simon Sturtevant*, His *Metallica*, *Anno* 1612, May 22. Printed by *George Eld*, *Cum Privilegio.*

"After *Simon Sturtevant* could not perform his making of Iron with Pit-cole or Sea-cole, according unto his engagement, King James and Prince Henry caused him to render up his Pattent, and a new Pattent was granted unto *John Rovenson*, Esq., who was also Enjoyned to write a Book of his Inventions, called *Rovenson's Metallica.* Printed for *Thomas Thorp*, *Cum Privilegio;* May 15, An. 1613.

"After John Rovenson, Esq., had often failed with his Inventions and great undertakings, —— *Gombleton*, Esq., a servant of Queen Ann's, undertook to perform the Invention of making Iron with Pit-cole and Sea-cole; but he being as confident as others did Erect his works at Lambeth, which the Authour viewed; and Gombleton failing, the Learned and Ingenious Doctor JORDEN of *Baths*, the Authour's Acquaintance, and sundry others obtained Pattents for the making of Iron and smelting of Mines with Pit-cole and Sea-cole, for the Preservation of Wood and Timber, all which Inventions and endeavours to Effect and perfect the said Works have been by many heretofore well known, to have worthily attempted the said Invention though with fruitless success."

"Having seen many of their failings, I held it my duty to endeavour, if it were possible, to Effect and Perfect so laudable and beneficial, and also so much desired Inventions as the making of Iron into cast Works and Bars; and also the Melting, Extracting, Refining, and Reducing all sorts of Mines, Minerals, and Metals, with Pit-cole, Sea-cole, Peat, and Turf, for the preservation of wood and timber, so much exhausted by Iron Works of late."

"Having former knowledge and delight in Iron Works of my Fathers, when I was but a youth; *afterwards* at 20 years old, was I fetched from *Oxford*, then of *Bayliol* Colledge, *Anno* 1619, to work and manage 3 Iron Works of my Fathers, 1 Furnace and 2 Forges in the Chase of *Pensnet*, in Worcestershire; but Wood and Charcole growing then scant, and Pit-coles in great quantities abounding near the Furnace, did induce me to alter my Furnace, and to attempt by

my new Invention the making of Iron with Pit-cole, assuring myself in my Invention the loss to me could not be greater than others, nor so great, although my success should prove fruitless. But I found such success at first tryal as animated me, for at my tryal or blast, I made Iron to profit with Pit-cole, and found *Facere est addere Inventioni.*

"After I had made a second blast and tryal, the fesibility of making Iron with Pit-cole and Sea-cole I found by my new invention, the quality to be good and profitable, but the quantity did not exceed 3 Tuns per week. After I had brought my Invention into some perfection, and profitable, I doubted not in the future to have advanced my Invention to make quantity also. Immediately after my second tryal, I wrote unto my Father what I had done, and withall desired him to obtain a Pattent for it from King *James* of Blessed Memory; the Answer to which Letter I shall insert, only to shew the forwardness of King *James* in this his much animating the Inventor, as he did both *Simon Sturtevant*, *John Rovenson*, Doctor *Jordaine* and others."

* * * "*Richard Parkes*, à Parks-house, Esq., the Authour's Brother-in-Law, about 1 year after the *Pattent* was granted, did carry for the Author much good merchantable Iron into the *Tower*, by King *James's* command to be tryed by all Artists, and they did very well approve of the Iron, and the said *Parkshouse* had a fowling Gun there made of Pit-cole Iron, with his name gilt upon the Gun, which Gun was taken from him by Colonel *Levison*, Governour of *Dudley* Castle, and never restored."

Dud Dudley had to run the gauntlet of bitter jealousies and obstacles on the part of the charcoal men, and shared much of the worst experience of inventors. In addition to these difficulties of contrary dispositions, he encountered a severe disaster the very next year after he obtained his patent, which he thus describes:

"There was so great a Flood that it not only ruinated the Authour's Iron-works, and inventions, but also many other men's

Iron-works; and at a Market Town called Sturbridge in Commitate Wigorniæ, although the Authour sent with speed to preserve the people from drowning, one resolute man was carried from the Bridge there in the day time, and the nether part of the Town was so deep in water that the people had much ado to preserve their lives in the uppermost rooms of their Houses."

Our author complains that the demolition of his works caused great joy among his rivals, who were very jealous of him because he sold good iron cheaper than they could afford it. They even went so far as to complain to King James that it was not a merchantable article; and when he had rebuilt his works, they prevailed on his majesty to command him with all speed to send all sorts of bar iron up to the Tower of London fit for making carbines, muskets, and great bolts fit for shipping, "which iron being tryed by Artists and Smiths, the iron-masters and iron-mongers were all silenced until the 21st of King James." At that time all monopolies were made null and void by an Act of Parliament; but the indomitable Dud and his father Lord Dudley obtained an exemption for the patent; or rather a renewal of it for fourteen years. Our author says he then "went on cheerfully and made annually great store of iron, good and merchantable, and sold it unto diverse men yet living at twelve pounds per tun; also all sorts of cast-iron wares, as Brewing-Cysterns, Pots, Morters, and better and cheaper than any yet were made in these Nations with charcoles."

But the more successfully he worked his new system, the more unrelenting and fierce grew the opposition he encountered from his rivals of the old charcoal order. They seem to have ousted him from his works in Worcestershire; but nothing daunted, he set up a furnace at Himley, where he produced a quantity of pig iron; but having no forge for working it into bars, he was obliged to sell it in that state to the charcoal ironmasters, who conspired to disparage it in the market. The history of his trials, persecutions, tribulations, and triumphs, as written by himself, is exceedingly interesting, and we would commend it to those who read with admiration the lives of the martyr-heroes of science and scientific industry. As the book is rare we give one more extract from it, showing what such men have had to endure in all ages from those most indebted to their genius and labours. Being thus cramped and thwarted at Himley, he says:

"The Authour erected a new Furnace on purpose 27 foot square, all of stone, at a place called Hasco Bridge, in the Parish of Sedgley, and county of Stafford: the Bellows of which Furnace were larger than ordinary Bellows are, in which works he made 7 Tuns of Iron per week, the greatest quantity of Pit-cole Iron that ever yet was made in Great Brittain; near which Furnace the Authour discovered many new Cole-mines 10 yards thick, and Iron-mines under it, according to other Cole-works, which Cole-works being brought unto perfection, the Authour was by force thrown out of them, and the Bellows of his new Furnace and Invention by riotous persons cut to pieces, to his no small prejudice and loss of his Invention of

making of Iron with Pit-cole, Sea-cole, &c. So that being with Law-Suites and Riots wearied and disabled to prosecute his Art and Invention at present, even until the first Pattent was extinct."

Such is part of the story of Dud Dudley, told in his own words. Such was the angry opposition he met in his attempt to utilize the vast deposits of coal, ten yards deep, in the Black Country, in working its iron mines. And this persecution from ironmasters and their men he suffered, when the wood of the district had nearly all been consumed, and when there was not a mile of canal or railway for the importation of charcoal from a distance. Such a sturdy hero, who fought one of the great decisive battles against the forces of pig-headed ignorance, stupidity, and prejudice, deserves a monument. But until he receives that richly-deserved tribute from a grateful and appreciating generation, enriched by his self-sacrifice, we would commend all interested in his memory to the tablet erected in its honour in St. Helen's Church, Worcester. The record of his life and worth is written in epigrammatic Latin, and although it does not refer to his "Pit-cole and Inventions," it gives incisively a few facts of his stormy experience, which we here cite from the original inscription, which might lose some of its covert meanings by translation:

"Dodo Dudley chiliarchi nobilis Edwardi nuper domini de Dudley filius, patri charus et regiæ Majestatis fidissimus subditus et

servus in asserendo regem, in vindicando ecclesiam, in propugnando legem et libertatem anglicanam, sæpe captus, anno 1648, semel condemnatus et tamen non decollatus, renatum denuo vidit diadæma hic inconcussa semper virtute senex.

> Differt non aufert mortem longissima vita,
> Sed differt multum cras hodieve mori.
> Quod nequeas vitare, fugis:
> Nec formidanda est."

Considering his energetic efforts and powerful influence in developing the resources and shaping the great industries of the Black Country, we trust few of our readers will think we have given a notice of disproportionate length to Dud Dudley. His inventions and experiments were of inestimable value to the entire country and to the world; and the present Earl does but deserved honour to this early representative of his house in prosecuting, on such an extensive scale, the enterprise which that remarkable man first set on foot at Himley more than two centuries ago.

Dudley is a goodly town of nine or ten thousand inhabitants, about ten miles west of Birmingham; and is planted high and dry above the levels of the intervening villages. Some portions of it are built upon hills uplifted above the smoke of the valley, but still enveloped thinly with smoke of their own making; for furnaces or forges are planted like redoubts on the ridgy eminences. As nearly every one of the towns and villages in the district is carrying on the iron and coal business in common

with all the others, each is nevertheless distinguished by some special branch of manufacture. Perhaps the distinctive speciality of Dudley is Wright's Anvil and Vice factory. The anvil business has been carried on by the Wright family for 200 years. They probably have sent more anvils to the United States within this period than all the other English makers put together, and there are few blacksmiths' shops in America in which their name is not well known. During the last year, they turned out nearly 11,000, and also 9,000 vices. The present head of the house, Mr. Peter Wright, introduced, some years ago, a great improvement, for which he obtained a patent. It simply consists in making the anvil of one solid piece of iron; whereas, by the old system, the different parts were made separately and then welded together. This was a difficult and unsatisfactory process, for frequently the weld would not be perfect in some places, and the hammer and sledge would ere long find out the defect, for the anvil would ring like a cracked bell under their strokes, and after awhile the horn or beck would go sheer by the board. The improvement in making them out of a solid block of iron is a very valuable one indeed, remedying all these defects of the old system. To accomplish this, the grains or threads of the iron, as Dr. Johnson would say, are "reticulated" with remarkable complications. To use a

simile which may help some to get an approximate idea of the process, a ball of iron wire as large as a bushel basket is welded in a solid mass; then that is again drawn into thin strips, which are again folded up and welded again, and hammered until a block is formed of the utmost tenacity of which the metal is capable. When the anvil is worked out to its perfect shape, as the French Marshal said of the old Imperial Guard, "Elle meurt mais ne se rend pas;" it may wear out but never breaks. This is not however the exact process; I have used the ball of wire merely as a simile. The raw material is old scrap iron, like old horse-nails, hoops, and the like, that have been passed under the friction of wear and thus been purified and solidified for their new field of usefulness.

Mr. Wright has also obtained a patent for a vice improved in the same way. That is, the box is of solid iron, in which the worm or *thread* is cut by machinery. This, if anything, is a more valuable improvement than that of the solid anvil; for this box and its thread, under the old system, being only soldered or brazed together, often broke down altogether after being used a while. Indeed, I well remember, when an apprentice to our village blacksmith, a vice-box was brought to the shop nearly every week to be repaired, by having a new worm or thread soldered in; and I know by personal

experience what a difficult job it was. Mr. Wright's improvement completely obviates this defect, and his vice deserves all the approbation and use it has gained in the United States.

Chain-making is another manufacture of Dudley, of great perfection and extent. Samuel Lewis, another name well-known by the hardware dealers in America, is one of the oldest and largest manufacturers of the town in this department. He turns out chains of every size and use, from the halter of a ship-of-the-line to that of a Scotch terrier. Hand-made nails constitute another large business, but as it more especially distinguishes other towns, the notice of it may be more properly reserved until we come to speak of them.

It is rather unfortunate for Dudley in one sense that it has so little history. It has a good and even historical name, and the ruins of one of the grandest castles in England. But it seems to be the *apanage* of one noble family, whose name overshadows or drowns in its illumination all the lesser stars. Doubtless it has given birth, or, what is better, moral and intellectual stature, to men who have made a mark in their day and generation, but it is rather difficult for an outsider to find it; or even the name of any writer, statesman, philanthropist, or patriot who made a reputation that has got into history, or far out into the hearing of the world. Still the whole future is before it, and,

under the new spirit of the age, it may yet present a goodly roll of names which the world may have motive to remember pleasantly. The history of the reigning family presents many unique and some very interesting vicissitudes. One of them—George Dudley—was mixed up in Cardinal Pole's plot against Henry VIII, and was caught and kept by Sir William Paget in France, who felt sure of sending him to condign punishment in England. But the sturdy knight was baffled in a manner which he thus piteously describes in a letter to his sovereign :

"This false, traitorous boy Dudley, I being at my supper, and straungers with me, and he having one of his kepars with him, and the dore of the place where he was standing negligently open, made semblant to walk up and down, while his kepar looked upon a booke, and whipping out of the dore, plucked the same after him, and to go so as, before the beastely foole could open the door and folowe him thother, was gone clene out of sight. I made after of all handes, and sent bye-and-bye to all the gates of the town, and kept that night fyve watches in searche; but all would not helpe, for in Paris (as they know that have been in it) a thousand false sherews may hyde themselves and not be founde. I beseech your Majestie moost humbly to think nothing els in me but folye, which I assure you, Sir, hath grieved me more thenne would have done the losse of all that ever I have, and take my children withall."

Young Dudley made his way into Italy, where Bishop Bonner, then on a mission to the Pope, had him arrested and confined in the castle at Milan. But he succeeded in effecting his escape from this duress still more ingeniously, and never was heard

of again. Early in the seventeenth century the Ward family was ingrafted upon the old Dudley stock, which had become rather sterile of moral vitality. Lord Edward, Dud's father, was a very fast character, and nearly ruined his estates by loose living. To recover them for his house, he married his granddaughter and heir, Frances, to Humble Ward, the only son of a rich jeweller to the queen of Charles I. This marriage of title to fortune recovered the sinking estate of the Dudley family. The Christian name of this founder of the house of Ward has a puritanic sound and meaning, which would grace the nomenclature of the Long Parliament; still he adhered to Charles, and became a member of "the mongrel parliament" which that sovereign convoked at Oxford in 1644. Having brought the king timely and liberal supplies, and being the husband of the heiress of Lord Dudley, his impoverished Majesty, having neither silver or gold, paid him in the cheap and easy coinage of a title, as Lord Ward. Whether he really received the name of *Humble* at the font, or at a later stage of his history when his character was fully developed, perhaps may be considered a matter of honest doubt. For, although he adhered to Charles to the last, and was a member of his Oxford parliament, he still managed to live on intimate terms of good and friendly intercourse with his republican neighbours who knew

him best. So, when the cause of his unfortunate master broke down, these seemed to have supported his petition to Protector Cromwell, which, dropping his new title, he preferred under the simple, puritanic name of Humble Ward; and, it is just possible, he then assumed it for the first time. To attach himself more closely or apparently to the ascendant cause, he contracted a double marriage between his family and that of Sir William Brereton, the Parliamentary general. So he succeeded in winning all the merit and the profit of fidelity to both Charles and Cromwell, bringing out of the revolution both his title and estates safe and sound. It is an interesting circumstance that the successive generations of his house have never sunk the name of *Humble*. A brother of the present Earl is Humble Dudley Ward; and doubtless that prefix of humility will be given to many a son on the descending line of the house.

The present Earl of Dudley came into possession of the family estates in 1845. It is said that for twelve years prior to this date, about £80,000 of the income of the property had been invested in real estate, including the princely establishment of Witley Court, in Worcestershire, the Earl's present country residence. It is estimated that his yearly income is the second if not the first in amount received by any nobleman or other

gentleman in England. He has been a munificent benefactor to the town of Dudley. No man in the kingdom has done more for his immediate community in the same order of good will and good works. In the first place, he has given the town such a park as no one else had to give, if disposed to do it. It is the Castle Hill already noticed, with all its winding walks, weird caverns and gorges, and avenues between, low-arched with braided hawthorn branches, and whitened and perfumed with the sweet sheen and breath of their spring flowerage. Here are glens made by the pick centuries ago, now overshadowed by the white-armed birch and forest elm, with the interweaving of all the lower trees and shrubs known to the county. Here are look-outs on the thickly wooded edges of the eminence, with rustic seats from which you may get varying aspects of all The Black Country and its Green Border-Land. Then there are the gray and massive walls and towers and bastions of the old Castle, and the green, quiet courtyard within, as pleasant a place as could be for merry children to play and sing to the echoes of their happy voices, stirring the broken walls with the pulse of a new age's life. Never was there a better natural site for a romance, and I wonder some novelist has not made it the scene of one. Doubtless the moral material might be found in the history of the Dudley family.

The special and more immediate gift of the present Earl to the town is the most costly and superb fountain yet erected in England. As a work of art it ranks among the best specimens of the latest school of design and execution. Most of our English readers have doubtless seen engravings of this beautiful structure in the "Art Journal" or "Illustrated London News," and I believe it is generally regarded by connoisseurs as the finest piece of sculpture of the kind that has been presented to any city or town in England. It was consecrated to its public use and ownership with great ceremony on the 17th of October, 1867, the young Countess of Dudley performing the inaugural rite and act with the sweetest grace of good-will. All who were present and saw her put the first draught from the fountain to her lips, and heard the words they uttered in bestowing the gift to the people and their posterity, must have congratulated the Earl in their hearts that he had found in her such a living fountain of domestic happiness, and must have wished him to drink of it to a purer and better life.

The Earl has done other generous things for the town which redound to his credit, and speak well also for the confidence he reposes in the masses of the people. In 1866 there was a local Exhibition of Arts and Industry in Dudley for the benefit of an object of great interest to the people. The

most skilful artisans and eminent manufacturers contributed their best specimens to this exposition. The Earl was a distinguished exhibitor in both of his capacities—as one of the largest iron manufacturers in the district and also as one of the wealthiest noblemen of the realm, in possession of the choicest and rarest works of art. He sent from his London and country mansions paintings of the old masters almost beyond a valuation in money. It was generous and confiding in him to hang up these delicate and precious treasures to the view of all the bank-men, pit-men, furnace-men, and forge-men, and nail-makers of the district, believing that not the roughest of them all would lift a soiling finger against the face of a Vandyke, Holbein, or Correggio. These acts and dispositions have very favourably impressed the people of the town and vicinity, while the whole nation was pleasantly affected by his munificent hospitality to the Viceroy of Egypt, when that prince visited London at a time when there was no royal palace vacant or in trim to give him suitable lodging and entertainment.

I have thus given several pages to a notice of the present Lord Dudley and his family, chiefly because he may be considered the Iron Earl of England, and because he manufactures the iron of the best edge-tools in the United States. I have thought that many who use and some who

make the axes of the Douglas Manufactory Company of Massachusetts might read these notes and observations, and that they would feel some interest in the name and character of the English nobleman who works his own mines and metals for New England forges.

Having surveyed The Black Country from Dudley Castle, the tourist or visiter of the district should go immediately to another view-tower but a few miles distant, which commands a scenery of remarkable contrast with the iron region of fire and smoke. This is the Clent Hills, in or rather over Hagley. It is doubtful if such a contrast can be found elsewhere in any country. It is a contrast which affects equally all the senses and faculties of enjoyment, and therefore all the more difficult to describe. From the Castle Hill of Dudley Nature has the under-hand, and from the crown of her head to the sole of her foot she is scourged with cat-o'-nine-tails of red-hot wire, and marred and scarred and fretted, and smoked half to death day and night, year and year, even on Sundays. Almost every square inch of her form is reddened, blackened, and distorted by the terrible tractoration of a hot blister. But all this cutaneous eruption is nothing compared with the internal violence and agonies she has to endure. Never was animal being subjected to such merciless and ceaseless vivisection. The

very sky and clouds above are moved to sympathy with her sufferings and shed black tears in token of their emotion. When you have sated the eye with this scene, even without being affected with these sentimental fancies, just go over to Hagley and ascend the citadel hill of the Clent range, and you will see what Nature is where she has the upper-hand, and breathes free from the asthma and rheumatism of the other condition. You see her in all the various dresses she has worn from her birth. On this furzy-breathing hill you see the simple and homely dress she wore when man first found her here two thousand years ago or more; and it is all redolent with the thymy odour that perfumed it then. But from this hill-top see what manner of robes she wears all along down into the deep, quiet valley and up its gentle, undulating slopes that meander to the distant horizon. The fingers of the Creator made the first garment for man, but He left to human hands the clothing of naked Nature; and these are the beautiful garments they have worked for her—dresses how varied of green and gold and of every tint the rainbow's pallet can blend and bring to the adornment! Here she reigns in all her peaceful and summer glory over a vast rural domain—a great picture of living and breathing beauty in an encircling frame of emerald, gilded by undulating lines of golden sky.

This lofty watch-tower on the Green Border-Land that divides the regions of coal and corn, is a favourite resort and breathing-ground of miners and forgers and the other sooty workers of The Black Country. On these bald and breezy heights they can quaff the luxury of the happiest and healthiest air that breathes, and disport themselves to their hearts' content in all the wild freedom of the place. One might think that a miner who had grubbed in coal-seams fifty fathoms under-ground for six days in the week, if he was a devout man, would feel himself at "a half-way house on the road to heaven" when standing the seventh on this Beulah hill of a new world. This common pasture for man and beast, which yields such fresh pure air for the one, and sweet though short grazing for the other, contains about 500 acres, all perfectly safe and secure as a common inheritance of the inhabitants of the villages below, and as a field of recreation for the people of the country around.

Hagley Hall, the seat of the Lytteltons, is situated at the foot of this hill, with an extensive and noble park running up to the brow of the eminence. The park is more classical in aspect than the mansion itself, which is a portly, rectangular, modern-looking building externally, looking more like the pretentious house of a retired manufacturer than the country-seat of one of the most scholarly

noblemen of England. The founder of this distinguished family, whose very name has a literary sound, or rather the first who attained to a peerage, was Lord George Lyttelton, who was appointed Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1757, but who was more thoroughly acquainted with figures of rhetoric than those of arithmetic. He was a man of cultivated and refined taste in literature, art, and nature. He was the author of various works, and produced poems of much merit both on paper and on gardens and lawns of exquisite culture. He was a generous and genial patron of these two kinds of literature, and attracted the companionship, and encouraged the labours, and stimulated the genius of eminent writers and artists. There are several monuments standing among the trees of the park, erected to some of these poets and men of mark. The present Lord Lyttelton, a greater, if not more productive, scholar than the ancestor who first won the title he has inherited, is a man of large and active ability, which he devotes to every good word and work for the well-being of the people, especially the working classes. He is not only a scholar by reputation and past attainments, but as a continuous and active student, who, perhaps, has played a little more with his learning than is meet in this practical age; or translated more from English verse into Greek and Latin than from Greek and Latin into English. Still, he

seeks to compensate the community for these literary and unproductive recreations by real, downright labour for the public good, in practical efforts for the education and elevation of the masses. He is Lord-Lieutenant of Worcestershire, and that and every other public duty devolving upon him he performs with assiduous devotion and ability. It may be gratifying to all interested in a name so intimately connected with classical literature to learn the fact, that its present noble incumbent has made ample provision for its perpetuation. I believe he has no less than eight sons and four daughters living, most of them grown up to young manhood and womanhood.

On going from Dudley to Hagley, the main road passes through Stourbridge, or Sturbridge, as it is generally pronounced by the common people of the town and vicinity. The early settlers of Massachusetts, in reproducing the central counties of England in that State in name, called a goodly town in their Worcester county *Sturbridge*, after this on the Stour. So that must have been the usual pronunciation two centuries ago. Stourbridge sustains a very important relation not only to all the iron and other metal works of England, but of the United States and other countries. Its fire-clay is the best yet found in the world, and its value to furnace and forge can hardly be over-estimated. Its fire-bricks and crucibles are

the hardiest salamanders of endurance ever submitted to the test of fire. They are as well-known to the metal factories on both sides of the Atlantic as the Bath brick is to the kitchens of Christendom. It is one of the rich and complete provisions of nature that distinguish this remarkable district. If this material had to be imported from France, it would have enhanced the cost of the production and working of iron and other metals. But the excellent qualities and exhaustless abundance of the fire-clay attracted to the town and introduced into the district a manufacture of vast importance in addition to the metal trade. The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes was an ill wind to the Protestants of France, and very grievous, but it blew fortunes to England and other countries. There was a general *hegira* of the best French artists from before the face and force of religious persecution, and thousands of every craft found asylum and employment in Great Britain. And they well and richly repaid the realm for both. They planted in English towns nearly all the artistic trades of the country. A family by the name of Hennezel, with several relatives of the name of Tyttery and Tyzak, settled down in Stourbridge in 1557, and commenced there the manufacture of glass, selecting the locality chiefly because of its excellent fire-clay for melting-pots. Others of the same family established the same

business at Newcastle-on-Tyne. Thus a single family of French refugees introduced into England this important manufacture, while others planted the ribbon trade at Coventry and silk-weaving in Spitalfields. From the Hennezels' day to this, Stourbridge has been distinguished for the perfection and extent of its glass manufacture, in which there are about a dozen houses engaged. As a proof of the excellence to which they have raised the art, one of these firms, Messrs. Walker and Son, received and executed an order from the Sultan for a chandelier which cost nearly £10,000. The oriental potentate, who owns and fleeces an immense flock of human sheep, penned in hovels and pastured in cheaply-made wilds, was so pleased with this great work of art and industry, as to order a spiral stairway of glass from the same firm, to ascend from the hall-floor of his palace to its dome. But the Messrs. Walker declined to undertake a job of such dimensions, difficulty, and expense, especially as no inconsiderable part of the work would have been in fitting the stairway to the palace after the glass part had been all cast and cut to the pattern. The cost would not have been less than £100,000, a sum which the holders of Ottoman bonds would have preferred to have seen put to more reproductive use. The French connexion with this manufacture of glass is still continued and even enlarged. The sand most

used comes from Fontainbleau and vicinity, and costs on delivery about £1. 4*s.* 6*d.* per ton. Thus the genius that first established the manufacture at Stourbridge and the raw material that now supplies it, the town and district owe to France. The manufacture of iron is also carried on extensively in Stourbridge. William Foster and Co. are one of the largest houses in the kingdom, employing nearly 5,000 hands in all their works.

The town, which contains about 8,000 inhabitants, has a venerable antiquity, and possesses several institutions founded in the olden time, of much value to the community. Chief among these is the Old Swinford Hospital, founded by Lord Foley, which houses, clothes, feeds, and educates about 130 boys, taken in at seven and kept till they are over fourteen years of age. They are then apprenticed to different trades and the premium is paid for them. If they behave and do well, at the end of their apprenticeship they are furnished with certain sums of money to aid them in setting up businesses for themselves. This is an excellent institution: it is one of the thousand acorns planted here and there over the kingdom a century ago, which have grown into great outspreading oaks of strength, refuge, and protection for thousands of poor men's children of this generation. The school is always full, as it is sure to be; and the property on which it is founded is

constantly increasing; for the oak is watered and fostered by the busy industries of the district, and the pick-men, forge-men, and furnace-men at their toil strengthen and lengthen its branches. A rich and everlasting blessing be on all such acorn-planters. One could almost wish that they might be allowed to revisit the earth and see the trees of their planting at their full growth and worth. Still thousands do see these trees at their growth, and can go forth and plant acorns by sight which the good men of the olden years planted by faith, without knowing, as we know, what would come of it.

## CHAPTER IX.

VISITS TO IRON MANUFACTORIES—THE BRADES WORKS, AND THEIR PRODUCTIONS—THE WREKIN—WILLENHALL.

IN visiting some of the leading manufacturing establishments of the district, I selected those which have a reputation abroad, especially in the United States. There are certain English names inscribed on articles of common use which may be truly called household words in America. *Barlow*, *Butcher*, and *Rodgers* are names familiar to every American boy sporting a pocket knife of any size or price. But there is still another name more exclusively connected with an implement of wide use with us. That is the Brades trowel. This brand rules the market, and probably it is borne by ninety-nine in a hundred of those wielded by the American masons. For this reason I had a particular desire to see the establishment in operation, and felt amply repaid for my visit. The Brades Iron and Steel Works are situated in Oldbury, between Birmingham and

Dudley, and are the growth of a century or more of accretion, each decade of the century seemingly adding its independent structure, so that the whole looks like a small village of buildings annexed to each other by narrower roads between them than the public streets of a town. It is truly a representative establishment, embracing in itself nearly all the industries and productions of the district. I doubt if such another can be found in England or the world for this remarkable variety of enterprise. In the first place, the company have sunk seven pairs of coal mines around their works. Most of the good coal they sell, using themselves the refuse for their furnaces and forges. They also own and work their own iron ore. Then from the furnace to the forge, from pig to bar, goes this raw material of their manufactures. The iron, now ready for its hundred uses, parts company for several stages of manipulation, then unites again in infinite shapes and relations. A portion is selected with great care for the carbonating kilns or ovens in which it is, as it were, seethed and saturated with the fire and fumes of charcoal. It now comes out blistered steel, fit for working up into tools that do not require a cutting edge; and a considerable quantity is used at this stage for such purposes. But most of it is now broken up into short pieces for the terrible crucibles or melting-pots of the air furnaces. If any one has

a curiosity to know how air may be made to act on combustion, or how the air-draught power has been developed, let him study the simple economy and arrangement of these furnaces. There is a large range of about twenty of them, all under draught if not blast at once. Nebuchadnezzar's furnace, seven times heated, was a kitchen fire compared with one of these for heat. Each is charged with its covered pot full of blistered steel with coal to match. Their lidded mouths dull the roaring sound of the terrible combustion, but the furnace-men show by their looks the intensity of the heat. The pouring-off sight is really thrilling. When the lid is removed from each furnace, and the pot of molten metal lifted out by a pair of long-handled tongs with rounded jaws, even a spectator must have steady nerves to look at it. To speak of white heat, or the heat of molten gold or silver would be like comparing the flame of a yellow tallow candle with the magnesian light. As the stalwart men, naked to their waists, remove the cover from the pot and pour the fluid into flasks for ingots, the brightness is almost blinding even to one standing at the distance of several paces. As the whizzing stream runs into the mould, it emits a sparkling spray dashed with rainbow tints from various ignited gases. When the metal is sufficiently cooled and hardened, it is taken from the moulds in ingots or bars of

cast-steel about twenty inches in length, and an inch and a-half square. It is then rolled, and hammered into all sizes and shapes, each operation refining and fitting it for the finest uses to which it is converted in the smith-shops of the establishment.

Most of the iron made into cast-steel and shear-steel comes from Sweden, and is the best for that purpose yet found in the world. In fact, no really good edge-tool can be made of any other iron. The English makes good blistered steel for wagon-springs and common tools; but does not combine toughness with hardness sufficiently for axes, cutlery, and even hoes and hammers. Still the quality of steel made of English iron has been so much improved by the new processes lately introduced, that the Swedish has been considerably reduced in price. The Brades Works use themselves most of the steel they make in the manufacture of their agricultural and other tools. They get better prices for the steel they sell than any other house in England except Huntsman, of Sheffield. They supplied the pen trade of Birmingham up to about 1850, at which time the rolled cast-steel was reduced to 38*s.* per cwt., and Sheffield took the business. They make their own files for economy's sake, as they last so much longer when made of such steel as they manufacture themselves.

First on the list of the Brades manufactory, as a special distinction, are their famous trowels, which in their line of use and excellence are equal to the celebrated Toledo blades in the implemental machinery of war. They are fully as elastic as any sword-blades, and can be bent double either way without a permanent crook. Plantation hoes rank next to trowels in their celebrity. Vast quantities are sent both to the United States and Brazil; those for the latter country are full twice the weight of the former. As they are for the cultivation of cotton in both countries, this difference in size and weight is rather singular. The union of machine labour in their production has been brought to great perfection. The rolling-mill and trip-hammer do the greatest part of the work. In the first place, the moulds or patterns are formed. The cast-steel is edged, or *champered*, in the bar, then cut into lengths of three or four inches to correspond with the width of the hoe-pattern. The borax weld is often made complete at one heat; and never more than two are taken. This operation is performed by the common hand-sledge and hammer; and nothing but a firm weld of the steel to the iron is sought for. The pattern or form thus steeled goes next to the great trip-hammer, which brings it out to its required size and thickness. Thence it is taken to the anvil of the smith-shop, where the eye is formed with

remarkable tact and celerity, and the blade trimmed into shape with the shears. It may serve to show the facility and fertility of their production, to say that four men will steel fifty dozen, and one man will hammer out twenty dozen a day of these great hoes. The iron is worth from £8. 10*s.* to £10 per ton, and the steel from 42*s.* to 45*s.* per cwt. It takes about three pounds of iron and six ounces of steel per hoe. The small coal, mostly used, costs on delivery about 7*s.* per ton.

I have dwelt more fully upon trowels and hoes, as the manufacture which has won for the Brades Works their especial reputation abroad. But they turn out a prodigious number of all the implements known to agricultural labour—shovels, spades, forks, garden-hoes, chaff-cutters, steel mould-boards for ploughs, and other articles of almost infinite variety and use. It may suffice to show the variety in design, shape, and size of one class of these articles to say, that the model department of the establishment contains 4,000 different patterns for straw-cutting machines, and nearly 2,000 patterns for cast-steel mould-boards for ploughs! Now, considering that, with the exception of the iron imported from Sweden for making their cast-steel, the Brades Works draw all the material they manufacture into these infinitely-varied implements from the bowels of the

earth around and under them, one cannot contemplate their operations and productions without admiration. Indeed they constitute one of the chief lions of The Black Country. I said, under them; which is literally true, for the whole village of buildings comprising the establishment has sunk full eleven feet below their first level. Once their foundations stood higher than the canal that runs by their side. The top of the canal is now nearly as high as their eaves, as it has been watched by rangers who have kept up its first level, while the furnace and forge-buildings with all their chimneys have sunk from being undermined. In returning to the railway station we saw a score of houses sunk up to their knees, and we looked down from the street upon floors once above its level, but now four or five feet below it. This is a characteristic feature of The Black Country. Everywhere you have the signs and presentiment of treacherous foundation. You see buildings that have subsided from their first levels at different angles of deflection, one end often sinking lower than the other, and making a rent in the outer walls. Some go down pretty evenly, like the Brades Works. Right under those terrible furnaces the moles are at work night and day rooting out walks through deep coal-seams. Under the foundations of tall-steepled churches all a-light with the evening lamps and resounding with the

voices of devotion, the pickmen are at work grubbing lanes under towns, hills, railways, and canals. Everybody seems to feel that they live, labour, eat, and sleep on a very uncertain and unsteady footing. But the decline is very gentle. A house seldom if ever sinks so deep that its occupants have to escape through the roof. The railways and canals, which require better levels, have to be looked to with some care; but no serious disasters have ever occurred in the district in consequence of this honey-combing of its under-priming.

When I first thought of making walks in The Black Country and its Green Border-Land, I proposed to explore the former pretty thoroughly before I entered upon the latter. But I soon found that one loses the vivid freshness of transition by this process of inspection, so that you do not look at the sceneries of nature or the noisy and busy scenes of human industry with such lively sensation, when seeing only one of these spectacles the same week or day. It matters not which you see first; whether you dip into this district of fire and smoke and artificial thunder and lightning from the greenest and quietest of rural landscapes, or into these from the black forest of forge and furnace chimneys; each produces a sensation of mind from the contrast, which it would not if seen by itself

alone. Thus I would suggest to any one who goes out from Birmingham or other large town to visit The Black Country, to go on, after he has seen its salient features, to the Green Border-Land beyond, and he will find several watch-towers of Nature planted at convenient distances around the iron district, as if on purpose to show the brightest, happiest, heavenliest of her sceneries in contrast with the huge swart industries of man. There are several of these eminences which furnish such points of observation, especially the Clent and Lickey Hills, which look off into vistas of rural life and beauty embellished with all the golden and emerald jewellery of the spring and summer's setting.

But there is a hill more famous still for its height, position, history, and scenery; a kind of Pisgah, which, if it does not overlook a Jordan, yet commands the view of a more picturesque river, or the Severn, with the little meandering Canaan through which it runs. This is "The Wrekin," the centre and cynosure of Shropshire's social life—the *Auld Reekie* of the county toasts. Never a hill outside of Judea had such a social status and attraction. To "All Friends round the Wrekin" is a toast and a saying full of pleasant associations and suggestions. It sounds like "All the folks at home," and has a kind of common hearth-stone ring to it. I had intended to make this famous

hill, which has become such a household and home-meaning word, the starting-point of my walks in the Green Border-Land of The Black Country; so, having challenged the poet Capern to accompany me, we set off on one of the brightest and cheeriest days of an English autumn. Even The Black Country through which we passed looked its very best, though the smoke was all the dunner for lack of cloud or murky mist. Little patches of struggling verdure, dashed with sooty stubble, caught some of the life and glow of the sunlight between the shadows of the towering chimneys. Wolverhampton is the border-town of the district. On its western outskirt the scene changes with surprising and sudden contrast. In a few minutes you are in the Green Border-Land. All is quiet, rural, and peaceful. Everything looks and feels as if it had a safe and permanent foundation. All the houses stand level and strong. You see none tipped over end-ways with one leg sunk to the knee. The cows and sheep feed or ruminate as if they felt at home, and would find all their pasture above-board on the morrow. The trees in hedge-row, copse, and grove seem to thank heaven out of the whispering lips of all their leaves that they can breathe its pure air and drink in the life of its blessed sun, with no black, despotic chimneys to molest or make them afraid. We were as much surprised as

delighted at this transition. It was the change of a minute's work by rail on leaving Wolverhampton. We were right in the midst of a highly-cultivated, picturesque country where Nature was in her holiday dress. There was a peep which would have photographed capitally and have made a beautiful picture. It was a straight and even piece of canal running between an avenue of tall and graceful trees a third of a mile in length. The sun in all its mild glory was looking up through this beautiful avenue, and turned the water between as we crossed it, to a long, silver-faced mirror, in which all the trees were looking at their faces, as if doing up their toilet for one of Nature's joy days. It was but a moment's glimpse, but long enough for the mind to photograph it vividly on the memory. We passed through a narrow belt or rather zone of this pleasant land, when we suddenly dashed into another Black Country—or that of Shropshire. A few miles beyond the antique, picturesque little town of Shiffnal we plunged into the *sierra negra* of Oaken Gates. They might have been oaken in the time of the Druids, but now they may well be taken for the iron gates of some subterranean or Plutonian region. Here are successive ranges of blue-black hills, looking like huge barrows, which have been windlassed up from unknown depths, leaving corresponding spaces in that un-

seen world larger than any catacombs we read of. Some of these barrows must be full sixty feet in height and a quarter of a mile in length. Should this volume go to another edition perhaps it will present a photograph of a section of these little black mountains sent up to the surface and planted in thick-set rows over it by the coal and iron miners of the district.

We left the train at Wellington, the station nearest to the Wrekin. I never knew before which of the Wellingtons the great English field-marshal associated to his title. I had always thought it must have been the Somersetshire Wellington; but, on seeing this Shropshire town and Oaken Gates, I am persuaded his title should have been taken here if it were not. No locality could have more appropriately given him the name of "*Iron Duke.*" Wellington is a considerable town, built in the old English fashion, as if to make the utmost of its space. This in early times was a pressing necessity when a town was built and walled for defence as well as for commercial and social life. But this habit became a second nature to the town-builders of old when the villages were sparsely scattered over the country, and there was all the space they could covet for wide streets and deep door-yards. Even on such sites they built as if closely compressed within relentless walls. Wellington has much of

the aspect of this mediæval economy, and some of its streets are crooked and narrow enough to please any antiquarian tourist. We noticed one in the centre of the town called Dun Cow Lane. Then some of the inns have all the quaint nomenclature of the olden times, which always give such zest and relish to their entertainment. At one of these we lunched on bread and cheese in the old tap-room fashion, then set forth on our small Alpine expedition. We came very near mounting the wrong hill, for there are several grouped together near the town. The Wrekin, however, cannot be mistaken when seen in comparison with the others. Indeed some derive its name from *wre* and *ken*, two British words which they say mean the "chief hill." Being set aright by a lad we met, we proceeded by a winding road between the two heights. The one on our left as we ascended presented a remarkable form and appearance. Several hundred feet of its flank showed a geological formation worth studying, and which I will not undertake to describe in the usual stiff and technical phraseology. To the common reader, who rather tires of such terms, I would only say: Imagine a small, precipitous mountain with all its bare, steep rocks on fire, and all its alternate currents of red flame and blue smoke blown and twisted about by the wind. When you have this sight fresh and distinct in

your imagination, just fancy the frigid zone let in upon the huge conflagration, and all that twisted flame and smoke congealed in an instant to solid rock, and you have the best idea I can give of the appearance of this remarkable geological formation. As we continued our way upward, this little mountain on the left, which we at first mistook for the Wrekin, assumed an animal form, something like Arthur's Seat at Edinburgh, but not so lion-like as that celebrated height. It took the shape of a huge elephant crouching on its haunches. From the shoulders backward it was covered with a tawny hide of frostbitten and russet fern. At every rod of our ascent the shape showed some new feature of resemblance, until the elephant was fully developed in all his good-natured strength and stature, as if looking off into the great valley northward like a huge beast of burden that had brought it a splendid load of good weather.

For about a third of the ascent we had a very good roadway, when at this point we left it by a path at a right angle and mounted to the "Halfway House," where we rested for a few minutes. It is a large cottage planted at a good point of view, and fitted up very comfortably for companies of visiters, even of the usual pic nic size. The waiting and refreshment room is a large apartment, chaired for forty or fifty persons, with a bay win-

dow for the northern aspect, embracing the whole end of the building. Although only a third of the way up the height, this out-look commands a prospect worth the ascent to the cottage to see. We were most agreeably surprised at the ease and comfort of the rest of the journey. We had fancied a rough, steep, and broken ascent over crags and precipices without a beaten track. But instead of this there was what might be called an inclined lawn all the way from the cottage to the summit, and thence down on the other side for a long distance. It was a lawn carpeted with that short, elastic moss which seems to quicken and delight one's footsteps. On each side was a thick growth of firs, birches, and other trees, with here and there an opening to give you a peep into the wide world beyond. We preferred, however, to pass these side glances without much notice, that the whole panorama might burst upon us at once at the top. And this fully realized our imaginations thus excited. We purposely restricted our eyes until we reached the summit, crowned by a small mound, with a short post or stake stuck in the centre of it, like the spike in the helmet of a Prussian soldier. This was "Heaven Gate;" and it opened upon a view of heaven and earth at that moment beautiful and glorious, beyond the genius of poet or painter to picture to a distant eye. It was the best possible light that could

be thrown upon it, to bring out all its best features to vivid, breathing life. The mellowest sun of an English autumn was descending the western horizon, and no other autumn sun the wide world round equals it, even at noon. In the first place, it seems to come down twice as near the earth as in America, as if it had closer social relation to it; or, for a few weeks in the year, delighted to spread its golden wings nearer to the glad and beautiful sceneries which it had created before they took the white veil of winter's frosts and snow. Then, at this season, it fills the whole heavens with a humid but not damp mist of light, unlike the dry, crimson suffusion of our American Indian summer's sky—a mist not golden of decided *nuance*, but like the weak dilution of the atmosphere of some vast orb of molten gold more distant than the sun. In such a light we looked off into the great valley, north, south, and west. It was a vast basin filled with autumnal glory that ran over the brim on all sides. From the height on which we stood, a hundred smaller hills sank almost to the levels of the common fields that floored the great amphitheatre with their living mosaic. The tall-timbered woods and groves interspersed looked like trunkless shrubs that spread their tinted foliage on the ground like rich carpets of leaves stemmed living in the earth. Truly, beyond other distance, height lends enchantment

to the view. It exalts every valley, brings high places low, makes rough places smooth, and forms a little world and walls it in with an horizon to fit and grace its own altitude. Far beyond the Severn sloped up the successive ranges of Welsh hills and mountains, as if they were the folds of the same azure cloud, that dipped its upper edge in the sun's nearer glory. Tops and ridges a dozen leagues apart seemed in the distance like the eyebrows and forehead-locks of the same face. The sun was just at the line whence it could pour aslant its best flood adown these crescent slopes into the great valley below, which the meandering Severn jewelled here and there with gold and silver brooches set in emerald. It was a scenery to be drunk in by reverent and thoughtful eyes; to take into the mind and treasure for the reflections of future days; to put with landscapes that live most vividly in memory. The view embraced something more than landscapes, however varied and beautiful. The blue lines of the Snowdonian range were a long way from the top of the nearest hill on the other side of the Severn, but the one looked to the eye like the foot and the other the crown of the same mountain. But what were these intervening distances compared with the historic intervals spread out before us! Here, but a little way before us, hidden among the green growths of a modern civilization, lies buried the old Roman

Uriconium, once a goodly city under several Roman emperors. No promiscuous huddle of wattled cottages and clay cabins was it in those days of Roman power and dominion. For twice the life's length of civilization in the Western Hemisphere the all-conquering eagle outstretched its silken wings over the walls of that busy city, now so dead and deeply buried. Pieces of its skeleton have been exhumed, such as carved columns and capitals, ornaments, coins, and all the ordinary articles of a civilized people, proving that it was a permanent city of homes and families. How mysterious the evaporation of that mighty empire—of such unparalleled solidities of human character! The Romans came to this island to subdue its soil and climate as well as its wild population. Doubtless they felt more pride in making the conquest than in the overthrow of Carthage and the extinction of the Punic nation; for this was the *Ultima Thule;* this was the extreme western wall of the known world which Alexander never reached, and on this Rome should plant her eagles as the conterminous boundary of the earth and of her own empire. All their lines of march, all the roads they made, the walled cities they built, and the military posts they planted, proved this intent and ambition. It was not to extirpate or enslave, but to subdue a savage people to the conditions of civilization that

they invaded and occupied the country. This little walled town thus buried for centuries was one of their centres and sources of civilized population. What has been already exhumed shows that it was built for a permanent and enlightened community, like all the other Roman cities in Britain—that the Roman soldiers were only its garrison, to defend a civilian population of all ages, of mostly husbands and wives and children. For twice the space of time that our American Boston has lived as a civilized community, this Uriconium had a consecutive population, increasing through a dozen successive generations. No history is extant to tell us how many women from Italy were brought into the country; but we know that the highest officers of the Roman army married British wives, and, doubtless, all the private soldiers allowed to marry did the same. Thus Uriconium, though in the first decade may have been only a fortified camp of soldiers, in the next would have become the residence of families, even if no Roman-born woman had ever been introduced within its walls. This Latinized community must have increased without any accessions from Italy, probably by the same ratio of augmentation as any other city population multiplying itself without immigration from abroad. What kind of language its succcessive generations spoke—whether a Latin *patois*, or a partially Latinized Celt—is a question

that philological antiquaries might discuss with interest. It is probable that all the other Roman cities in England became just such self-increasing populations of what may be called the Latin race in blood and language, and that they had advanced a long way in the arts, habits, tastes, and occupations of civilized life when the Roman soldiery was withdrawn to defend the great metropolis of the world. The Roman empire died suddenly of heart-disease. A man may be a Titan in size, with legs and arms of immense length and strength; but he may collapse and fall lifeless to the earth from paralysis as easily as a pigmy. So Rome fell, from no want of vigour in its limbs, but from a disease of the heart that had been generating for centuries. What became of all those Latinized populations in Britain, when the Roman soldiers left it? They certainly must have numbered half a million. They ought to have been double that figure. There were not vessels enough floating on the seas of the world to transport these numerous and populous communities, even if Italy could have given them house-room within its borders. They must have remained here and blended with the Saxons, through them with the Danes, and through both with the Normans.

The hill-top of the Wrekin overlooking this buried Roman city, and elevated 1,300 feet above the sea, is not only a grand point of observation

but of reflection, commanding landscapes of wonderful extent and variety and scenes of historical interest dotting, like diversely-tinted fields, the checkered expanse of eighteen centuries. As the eye passes from one feature to another of the great valley, so the mind passes from scene to scene and fact to fact in the histories of the land that have been enacted in that space. It does not require an exuberant imagination for the thought to pass from the Roman sentinel pacing the wall of Uriconium in the moonlight, to Falstaff swaggering from the battle-field at Shrewsbury into the tent of Prince "Hal" with the dead Hotspur on his back. You need not think of common sense or its hum-drum dictates, if you really listen with attentive and expectant faculties for "Shrewsbury clock" striking Falstaff's "long hour." There is that famous old city itself standing with its brave, tall steeples half-melted in the mist, with the Severn folding it clear around the waste with its arm, as if it were the very bride of its love. All the space between, and up and down the valley is dotted with centres of historical and industrial interest interspersed with the varied aspects of the landscape. It would be almost irreverent to blend them promiscuously. But they have done it themselves. Yonder is the little village of Acton Burnell where Edward I held his parliament in quarters which might reconcile

the present one to their cramped space. On this occasion the Commons held their sessions in a barn, and probably had bundles of straw for their "ministerial benches." The speaker's chair may have been a perch on the bay-beam. The peers temporal and spiritual probably met in the knights' hall, well garnished with boars' heads and deers' horns. Here, in speeches of Norman French, they discussed the public affairs of the kingdom. There is Broseley, well known in the tap-rooms of this and half-a-dozen other kingdoms for its tobacco-pipes. Sir Walter Raleigh was the making of that village and its business when he introduced the Indian weed from America. The Broseley clay was the best fitted for this tubular pottery, and its potters worked out a marvellous variety of patterns for burning the narcotic incense to an evil habit. One of the local archæologists has collected one hundred and thirty specimens, all of different design and make. Between these two points of historical and industrial interest is Wenlock and its old abbey ruin with its ranks of pillars and arches marked with all the genius of the religious sculptors of the Middle Ages. It is a structure ruined picturesquely by the old abbey-mauler of Henry VIII, Oliver's predecessor and teacher in the tactics of demolition. Then in the mosaic of all these heterogenous associations, you have

Coalbrookdale with its kitchen-souvenirs. Who ever heard its name pronounced without thinking of a sad-iron or an iron porridge-pot? What village or hamlet in the United States has not some memento of Coalbrookdale in suites of its hollow-ware? From the Wrekin the eye runs up and down the slopes of this great basined expanse, and takes in all this checker-work of nature, art, labour, and history in a glance.

We could not have selected a more favourable time or have had a better day for our view from the Wrekin. We not only had a splendid vista of landscapes grouped picturesquely in the best lights, but we saw a whole season in its most beautiful aspects; and the best season in the English year. The plane scenery in England in autumn cannot be equalled by that of any other country, nor by the view in this at any other time of the year. Our American skies, mountains, and trees in the Indian summer are more brilliant in their tinting than those of England; but the surface or landscape picture here in the same month excels ours in finish and beauty, and also surpasses the English scenery in spring or summer. In spring there is a monotony of tinting in the general landscape after all that the flowers can do to vary the aspect. The green shows all its resources of colouring; but green is the ground of every shade, and it

absorbs and governs all. But in an English autumn you have all the colours on an equal footing, and no one has an absorbing place or power in the landscape, although its own is retained to all its life. You see a green in the middle of November which the grass or grain-fields never show in spring. For nothing in May or June can equal the green of a field of Swede turnips, or the vivid hue of mangel-wurzel. These crops come out rich in the autumn landscape here; and when alternated with the bright stubble of recently-harvested wheat and barley-fields, and fields of lake-coloured soil harrowed and smoothed to a garden's surface for the harvests of another year, you have the ground-work of a picture which the English May does not present, and which our American autumn cannot equal, because these root-crops do not make a feature of our landscape. Then the English hedges that, like gilded frames, enclose these various fields, give to the whole vista an aspect which no other season or country can equal. Indeed, in green itself the October of England outdoes its June in distinctness, diversity, and grouping of the shades of that maidenhood colour of vegetable life. For, besides these luxuriant crops then in full verdure, there are pasture lands and twice-mown meadows showing, between long files of hedge-row trees, as vividly green as any our landscape presents

on the summer edge of May. Then there are other qualities that not only compensate the season for all its early frosts have abstracted, but give it more than the virgin month of summer can offer to the senses. The bloom and breath of flowers in May delight the eye and that sense which needs not sight for its enjoyment. But October's flowers, which she hangs in the sun from a thousand orchards, are beautifully tinted, too, and the breath of her ripe pears and apples is more delicious still, nor will it pall so soon as that of roses upon the delicate sense that drinks in the odours of the three life-bearing seasons of the year. Over and above this universal savour of ripened fruits and harvested corn, there is a sense of plenty which even a blind man may enjoy in autumn, as if the earth were offering up her thanksgiving incense to the soft bending skies above, so full of the sun's best smile that they look like humid eyes moistened and glistening with tears of joy.

When standing on the Wrekin's crown, I felt it were worth the journey and the ascent merely to see from it the English autumn in its full glory. But blending this vista with all the other features of the view, it was a grand standpoint for observation and reflection—for the eye and mind to roam in thoughtful silence over that wide scene of the industries and histories of England

and all its motley races back to the dawn of Christianity. And there was stillness, as if the height were hushed in the clearer view or quickened sense of holy sublimities which the loud and noisy levels of earth's daily bustle, toil, and turmoil cannot feel. No wonder that, in the days of old when religious men essayed to get nearer to God and His fellowship by climbing the silent mountains for prayer, some long-bearded devotee of sequestered meditation should have pitched his sanctum on this lofty and solemn hill. Such a recluse was Nicholas de Denton, who in the reign of Henry III fixed his abode here; and that sovereign was so impressed with the spiritual influence which the hermit would imbibe and diffuse at this great altitude, that, in order to afford him "greater leisure for holy exercise, and to support him during his life, so long as he should be a hermit on the aforesaid mountain," the sheriff of Shropshire was ordered to supply him with six quarters of corn from the Pendleston Mill, near Bridgnorth. Doubtless it was the understanding that the hermit should pay toll on this corn in daily supplication for his sovereign.

The Wrekin is not only a remarkable eminence for the eye but also for the ear; especially just as the sun is sinking to the rim of the horizon. From all hills, both great and small, voices, that would not be heard at noon, come up to you

as if the lower skies exhaled them, as they do the earth's invisible vapours. But we listened to them from this serene height with wonder that sounds of such small projectile force could ascend so high. The rippling, rollicking voices of children in far-off villages blended and floated up to us in that cheery music of young human life that is so delightful. Then we heard the silvery murmur of church bells striking the hour, but could not tell whence it came or whither it went. It came like a pulse of sound that had touched every golden ray of the sun's setting light in heaven, and set it agoing like a harp-string. Then listening to this and that, as to the happy music of human spheres, a gander full five miles away spoke up in a brassy, peevish ejaculation, as if jealous for his order and determined to let the upper world know that other bipeds than man walked the earth and looked erect on heaven. Indeed, I think some of the tongues we heard must have uttered their voices in Shrewsbury, or in villages ten miles distant.

The point which we found most favourable for observation was not the very crown of the hill, but a little lower down on the western side, or the "Bladder Stone," a term which must have been intended to convey the German idea of a sausage, or of one made of turnip and liver. The rock presents not only these colours, but the chopped-

up materials of a sausage. One can easily see, when standing on this brassy-looking crown of the Wrekin, or when looking at the contour of the hill from a distance, that the name it bears is not Celtic but Latin, Saxonized in that queer, quaint way in which our common and remote ancestors served even classical words of Italian origin. I have already noticed the marked resemblance of the sister hill to an elephant couchant. The Roman soldiers, as they penetrated up into the country on the Severn, then its only broken road, must have been equally struck with the resemblance of this little mountain to the head of a wild bull, or of the *urus*, surmounted by a helmet. When they came to pitch their camp upon it, and see what manner of brazen-looking helmet it wore in the Bladder Stone, and to plant their flag-staff upon it, the fancy was strikingly realized; and it would have been the most natural thing in the world for them to call the hill *Uriconus*. The rank and file of the soldiery would have shortened the word by a syllable in pronunciation, and called it *Uricon*, and the half-Latinized population of the district would have adopted the same appellation. As the Romans probably had neither an English *w* or *i* in their alphabet, they would have spelt and pronounced the word *Urecon*, and that has done better than a hundred other Latin words in coming down to the present day through such a

medley of various races and tongues, in escaping with so little change as that from Uricon to Wrekin. It would be natural for the Romans to call the permanent city which they built afterwards almost at the foot of this hill, *Uriconium.*

Having luxuriated for an hour or two on the helmet of this famous hill in the scenery it commanded, we descended, with the descending sun, the western side, and made our way back to Wellington along the wooded skirt of the eminence. Following footpaths which were faintly marked among the leaves and across brooks, we reached the main road to the town. Midway we over-took a regular Saxon—a fair-haired broad-shouldered man of about thirty, wearing the hereditary livery and untaxed powder of a miller. We fell immediately into conversation with him, with the wish to elicit from him some additional facts or ideas to add to our impressions already obtained. We found that he was a contented, happy wight walking upon the green border-land that divides between the early dreams and mild realities of married life, and that both were blending pleasantly in his present experience. For, on asking if he had been often on the Wrekin, and knew the people who lived in the half-way cottage, he said he knew both well and had often visited them. Indeed, he added, with a deeper colour to his honest face and half-timidly, he had married

his wife at the cottage about three years ago. Here was a spice of romance to season our walk; so we drew him out gently on various points of his history. His name was William, and his mountain bride was Mary Ann, and he spoke of her as fondly and as proudly as if she were his queen as well as his wife; and we honestly, not quizzingly, admired this sentiment. We believed it was sincere and deep within him, and the face he put upon it was a true and honest reflection of it. Indeed, my friend Capern felt his muse stirred by it, and on the spot, without two minutes' reflection, treated the blushing miller to this verse, purporting to come from the young wife:

> "Your passion is strong, but the Wrekin is steep,
> And the journey is double, my dear;
> So, as your affection I am willing to keep,
> I will now save you trouble, my dear."

The rustic husband seemed so pleased at this poetical idea of his Mary Ann's feelings towards him ere she descended from her elevated height to be his wife, that I regretted being unable to add to his satisfaction by a verse of my own. But as I could do nothing in the rhyming line, I gave him a tit-bit from Dryden's "Ode" in the two lines, slightly modified:

> "She raised a mortal to the skies,
> He drew an angel down."

It proved a good hit, for he evidently gave me the credit of composing the lines as well as of understanding how the matter really stood between him and the girl he wooed and won on the Wrekin. Indeed, as we walked along under the brows of the two hills, we could see his lips move now and then as if whispering over to himself the lines we had devoted to his domestic felicity. He was evidently bent on carrying them to his young wife. Capern was delighted at the impression upon him in this direction, so, on the spur of the impulse, he gave him a practical suggestion in a homely verse to be remembered in pursuing his daily occupation:

"The poor man carries his grist to the mill,
The miller a merciful wight is he,
The poor man has many mouths to fill,
So he lets the toll of the poor man be;
The farmer sends a two-bushel bag
Of the very best wheat his barn doth hold,
And the miller, a jolly-faced, merry wag,
Says, a moderate dish when the corn is tolled.
The rich man sends a well-filled sack,
For the rich man hath plenty in store,
And the burden sore bendeth the miller's back,
So he lightens the weight for himself and the poor."

This was well meant on the poet's part, but not seemingly so well taken on the part of the miller, who was busy storing away in his mind the verse about his wife and their first love and joint happiness. He did not understand Capern's ethics in

regard to toll quite so clearly; doubtless thinking it would have been an unsatisfactory policy in the estimation of his most profitable customers. Our ways diverging at the edge of the town, we exchanged a hearty "Good evening" with him, and both of us voted unanimously that our meeting such a good specimen of everyday human nature was a pleasant incident, bringing us down from rather visionary heights of observation and musing to the common levels of working life.

We found the little inn where we had lunched swept and garnished for our reception. The landlady, a smart, bright young woman, had somehow or other conceived the notion at our first call, that we were not exactly of the common run of her tap-room guests; so, on our return, she ushered us into her little back parlour, which was full ten feet square, and as comfortable and genial a little room as could be. There were no rigid right angles about it, but its walls were wavy and rounded and softened at the corners; and the ceiling was so delightfully low that I could not stand upright with my hat on under the large beam overhead. The best furniture of the house was tastefully arrayed in this cosy little room, and florid saints and soldiers stood on the mantle-piece in rich robes of porcelain velvet. And there was the genuine English tea-kettle on the bright hob sing-

ing a welcome to us. And the young landlady had set another musical instrument a-going opposite, or a large music box, which, as we entered, struck up, "Over the water to Charlie," and played it with caroling fervour; and it seemed to animate the bright-faced kettle, as the two, though singing different tunes, made a cheery concert for us. Then the mistress had tidied herself up neatly and smartly, with the evident intent to do her best to make us at home, and she did it thoroughly. Beyond our expectations, she could supply us with slippers, so that we could pull off our damp shoes and sit by the bright fire with a delicious sense of rest and comfort. The copper face of the singing kettle was all aglow with its warm radiance; and, forgetting the Wrekin and its great surroundings and suggestions, we fell into a discussion of the domestic music of this harp of the hearth; how its little twittering melodies had cheered the homes of the poor for long generations back; what songs it had sung to peeled and rough-handed labour at the close of the day's toil; what it had been to sick-rooms, and tents of wounded men on the fought battle-field; what inspiration it had breathed into social life and the companionship of the morning and evening meals. Really, our thoughts radiated outward from the burnished and palpitating lid further than they did from the helmet of the Wrekin; and I pressed Capern to make them

the subject of a poem, under the title of "THE SONG OF THE TEA-KETTLE." This he promised to do; and I have no doubt will bring out the music and mission of that hot-water piano of the poor man's home fully; so I will say nothing more about it here.

After an appetising tea-supper on the little round table before the pleasant fire, we bade our hostess "Good night," and returned by an early evening train to Birmingham, with most enjoyable recollections of the day's excursion and incidents.

As the largest manufactory of door-locks and fittings in America is that of my old neighbours in New Britain, Connecticut, Russell, Erwin, & Co., I had a particular desire to see what may be called a rival establishment in Willenhall, about ten miles north of Birmingham. This is one of the oldest and most extensive lock factories in the kingdom, and is called The Summerford Works; Messrs. Carpenter & Tildesley are the proprietors, and the father of the former was the founder in 1795. Mr. J. C. Tildesley is perhaps the best authority on locks to be found anywhere, having written up their history through four thousand years of record. In the valuable paper he contributed to that coöperative work of literature, "Birmingham and the Midland Hardware District," he has quoted Aratus, Ariston, Eustathius, Callimachus, Homer, and other Greek poets and writers from their days

down to this on the subject of keys and their infinite variety of construction. In the Middle Ages locks and keys exercised and disciplined the finest mechanical skill and artistic taste of various ingenious communities. They were not only elaborated for security but for ornament, and nothing made in these modern days can approach those unique productions. Indeed, the artist in iron, steel, and brass set to work upon the lock and key for a city gate, cathedral, or palace door to connect the memory of his name with the edifice for ever; or as a Raphael would sit down to a Madonna which should attract the reverent admiration of ages to come. The artist-mechanic was moved by the same impulse and in the same direction. The religious enthusiasm of the age inspired him with the same devotion to his work; and he threw his whole heart, mind, body, and soul into it. If the great Italian painter presented to the world, his "Assumption of the Virgin," he fixed his eye and heart upward in the wake of the same glory. He with his steel pencils, chisels, and drills would do something in the same line. And he did it. His idea was rude and material, but his sentiment was honest and clear; and let no one of this later age of light blame him for his conception. Such was the thought of a mechanic of Gaul in the dawning light of Christianity in that country, soon after the name of France was born. The sketch of his

*Serrure de Tabernacle* is still preserved. On the escutcheon surrounding the key-hole are figures of our Saviour on one side and two angels on the other—angels of mercy, doubtless meant, posted at the portal of the blest to salute the incoming saint receiving the welcome, "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter into the joy of thy Lord." The work of a life apparently was devoted to the elaborate and delicate engraving of images, symbols, and scrolls, and inworking of beads around the edges.

As we come down to the utilitarian centuries, locks and keys began to be made more for practical use than fanciful ornament. The Chinese, as in many other departments of mechanical skill, seem to have led the way in the manufacture of unpickable locks. They introduced the lever or tumbler principle. The Dutch get the credit of the combination or letter-lock. It was so constructed that the letters of the alphabet, which are engraved on four revolving rings, may be required, by pre-arrangement, to spell a certain word, or number of words, before it can be opened. One of these locks was made to open only with A. M. E. N. The poet Carew, in verses written in 1620, thus describes this complex contrivance:

> "As doth a lock
> That goes with letters, for till every one be known,
> The lock's as fast as if you had found none."

English ingenuity in inventing new defences for locks was largely developed in the reign of Elizabeth, when one skilful smith is said to have made a lock consisting of eleven pieces of iron, steel, and brass, all of which, with a pipe-key, weighed only two grains of gold. The Marquis of Worcester describes a lock invented in 1640 so constructed that "if a stranger attempt to open it, it catches his hand as a trap catches a fox, though so far from maiming him for life, yet so far marketh him that if suspected he might easily be detected." The first patent for a lock in England was granted in 1774; from that date to this inventors and improvers have made a vigorous race of competition. The list of successful runners numbers about 120 patentees; and as every one of them must have introduced some new principle or application, one can easily imagine what varieties have been introduced. The Napoleon of locks, who reigned with undisputed or undeposed sway for half a century, was Joseph Bramah, of London. He patented his famous lock in 1784, and not only he, but the whole out-door and in-door world had perfect faith in its impregnable defence and security. He threw down his glove to all comers in the following notice in his shop window: "The artist who can make an instrument that will pick or open this lock will receive two hundred guineas the moment it is produced." For many years this

challenge was kept standing in his window. The very confidence it expressed seemed to repress all attempts to undermine it. In fact, the confidence was mutual in the challenged and challenger. But 1851 came with its great Exhibition in London, and its assemblage of skill and art from other countries. Our American Hobbs came with others of his ingenious countrymen, and one day, passing Bramah's window, noticed this challenge, and took up the glove. He set to work to test the inviolability of the lock, and, to the surprise of everybody, opened it after a few days of persevering labour. The sensation produced by this feat was almost national. Indeed it seemed as if one of the bulwarks of the nation's faith in its safety was broken down. But, as Corporal Trim would say, it was "worth a regiment of horse" to the lock-makers in England. It gave a great stimulus to the trade by bringing into it new science, skill, and genius. Bramah had virtually stopped the way against further improvement. He was supposed to have reached the outer line of perfection, and his lock was regarded as a finality. But Hobbs cleared the track of this heavy and obstructive notion, and the lock trade of the kingdom was greatly benefited by his skill and its feat.

Chubb is another great name connected with the manufacture of locks. Two or three generations of the family have introduced various im-

provements; the most distinctive of which is their celebrated *detector*, which acts when any false key is introduced into the lock, and bars the burglar's further progress. So extensive are the combinations invented by them, that the present Mr. Chubb affirms that it would be quite practicable to make locks for all the doors of all the houses in London, with a distinct, different key to each lock, and yet there should be one master-key to pass the whole. The Chubb's patent was granted in 1818. Mr. J. Carpenter, of Willenhall, and Mr. John Young, of Wolverhampton, jointly obtained a patent in 1830 for a lock in which the action of the catch-bolt was perpendicular instead of horizontal. This invention resulted in great success; and "Carpenter's Locks" became literally a household word in every market at home and abroad. The few noticed are some of the 120 varieties patented in Great Britain, many of which came into extensive use.

Willenhall is the chief town of the district in the lock trade. There are about 275 employers and 3,000 hands engaged in the manufacture. The earnings of the men and boys vary from 18*s.* to 30*s.* per week. The production of the whole district, including padlocks and every other thing that goes by a key, is estimated at 31,500 dozens per week, 450 employers and about 5,000 hands being engaged in the trade. Nearly all countries of the

world supply a market; Australia and New Zealand being the most important customers for door-locks. The American demand has been small comparatively of late years, and is rather decreasing still in consequence of the perfection and extent to which the manufacture has been brought in the United States. Thirty years ago it was estimated that half the locks made in the district went to America. For the last few years the demand from that side was confined mostly to till and padlocks; but these articles are now being made extensively with us; so few of any description are now imported.

The factory of Messrs. Carpenter and Tildesley is one of the oldest and most extensive establishments in England, and turns out a remarkable variety of locks in form, size, and price. They make about 200 different kinds, and six sizes to each kind, or 1,200 different locks in pattern or size. They produce about 200 dozen a week; the price varying from 7*d.* to £1 per lock. But if the American market is virtually closed against these articles, it is still open widely to another which yet holds its own against any protected competition on our side. That is, the currycomb. The cheapness and facility with which this is produced here are truly remarkable, and not easily to be matched by American ingenuity. The factory makes about 1,100 dozens a week, most of which go to America.

They are purchased from one halfpenny, or *one cent*, to one shilling apiece. Think of a currycomb made for actual service, with teeth and handle complete, for *one cent!* There are also nearly a hundred different styles or patterns of the article.

The locksmiths of America, France, and Germany are energetic rivals of the English manufacturers. The Americans have a great advantage not only in their application of labour-saving machinery to the process, but from the superiority of their moulding sand over that used in this country. Their brass and iron castings consequently are much smoother, and need much less work in finishing the different parts. An artisan who had gone to the States recently wrote to his friend here, that he could make 150 door-locks in a day, whereas twelve were about the average rate for a workman in England. Of course, improved machinery and processes of manipulation as well as superiority of moulding sand and castings made up a part of this difference.

The hands employed in this branch of manufacture embrace both sexes and all ages capable of manual labour. And as many of the operations are light, they furnish labour for a large number of children. Perhaps no trade of equal production ever adopted the apprentice system more extensively. In 1841 the number of apprentices was

651, and most of these were brought from the workhouses of the immediate neighbourhood. This and other circumstances connected with the character and habits of the hands generally produced a rather low *morale.* But from that time this kind of apprentice system has supplied a smaller proportion of the operatives, and they have much improved in their general character.

While at Willenhall I went to see one of the numerous coal-mines in the neighbourhood, which have erected many parallels of high, black bulwarks, which no army could scale without tall ladders. The men were just ascending from the pit, so I only ventured to look over into its dark mouth, and to wonder if the apostle of the Apocalypse ever saw anything of the kind before he had the sublime vision which he described with such splendid diction and imagery. How wonderful is the industrial economy of human necessities! What infinite and mysterious provisions to meet and satisfy their demands! The greatest mystery of all is this, that the demands of these necessities should not only produce occupations but tastes of endless variety. I have not the slightest doubt that every mother's son of these subterranean toilers would prefer, at the same price, to grub on his back or knees by lamp-light down in the coal seams fifty fathoms under ground, rather than to plough, reap, or

mow in the sunniest fields in England, with its sweetest singing-birds piping to him from the hedge.

I was struck with the vast amount of coal wasted in these immense barrows of the refuse of the pits. Mr. Tildesley, who was with me, admitted that one-sixth of the whole mass would burn well in the grate; and I thought much of the severe frost and of the cold hearths of the poor in Birmingham last winter, who were out of work and out of bread. I am sure there was coal enough in the long, narrow hill on which I stood to warm the house of every such man and woman in the town if it had been riddled out. I wish the authorities would try the experiment next winter, and set one hundred men, begging for work, at this employment to furnish coal for the destitute. I am confident that all these coal-pit hills of refuse will be utilized some day for agricultural or other purposes; that they will be pulverized and conveyed by canals to distant parts of the country to supply an element that certain soils require for fertile production.

Willenhall has a good Saxon accent and meaning to its name; and its history is rich with the legacy of centuries. Here the Saxons and Danes had one of their sanguinary battles for the mastery of England, and the latter were

defeated here with the loss, it is chronicled, of two kings and many nobles. In later times it was the scene of one of the most romantic passages in English history. Charles II, after his defeat at Worcester, found one of his most secure and trusted hiding-places at Bentley Hall, belonging to a fine old English gentleman by the name of Lane, and now occupied by the incumbent of Willenhall. Here he remained for several days, an honoured and welcome guest. But when he saw the notice of a thousand pounds reward to any man "who should discover and deliver up the person of *Charles Stewart*," and the penalty of high treason declared against those "who presumed to harbour or conceal him," he felt it was time to make his way to a country where such offers and denunciations would not hold against him. His host devised the mode of escape, which has become such a subject for the painter. He mounted his outlawed sovereign upon a horse and put his daughter, Jane Lane, behind him, and despatched them to a friend in Bristol, a port whence he hoped to reach France. He was to act the invalid son of a neighbour, who desired to try the merits of the sea air, and was willing to work his passage to it by holding the reins for Jane Lane. Her brother, the famous Col. Lane, managed to overtake them accidentally at each stopping-place for the night, and between

them they were able to secure comfortable quarters for the son of their neighbour, who felt more poorly than he looked. In this way they reached Bristol, and "Over the Water to Charlie" was the tune that the music-box played to us in the little inn at the foot of the Wrekin.

## CHAPTER X.

BRICK-MAKING—HALESOWEN—NAIL TRADE—SHENSTONE AND THE LEASOWES.

SHENSTONE! what a classical sound that word has wherever the English language is spoken! Even if it had not been the name of a man who won such wide renown, it is in itself full of pleasant accent and significance, though one may not say why. A painter, poet, or statesman inheriting such a name finds half the battle fought and won for him at the outset of his career. A long distance must have been mastered on the high road of merit before Dobbin or Bobbin can overtake him at his starting-point. A good Teutonic word it is, doubtless coming from *Schœnstein* or *Shining-stone*. He was the poet lawnate of England, if it be admissible to coin a word, which the dictionary lacks, to give the distinguishing characteristic of his genius and works. I was not aware that he planted his little elysium on the near edge of the Black Country until I had been

for some time in Birmingham. Capern had made his pilgrimage to it soon after he came to the town to reside; so we arranged to visit it together, and on the seventh of November we set out on our walk. Meeting an extensive brick-maker, we stopped to see his establishment near the Old Hill Station, but a little way from Halesowen. Here he was carrying on a large business in the manufacture of blue-black bricks of every size and pattern for coping of walls, stable floors, and other uses. He had expended £7,000 in buildings and machinery, and was turning out about 100,000 bricks a week. Here was another specimen of the riches and resources which Nature has stored away in the cellars of The Black Country. The space from which he had taken the clay for 100,000 bricks a week for several years would not measure over half an acre, embracing the whole compass of the pit's mouth. The crater is already sixty feet deep, and the clay, he thinks, will hold good for twice that depth. It is what we call in America "dyed in the wool," and not in the burning. The establishment embraces the latest improvements in brick-making, and all the mechanical forces are utilized to their utmost capacity. The steam-engine, for instance, draws up on an inclined tramway from the bottom of the pit a huge coal-scuttle full of the clay, enough to make 500 bricks, and tips it over at the top of the line into

a hopper, whence it goes down through successive kneading-troughs, and is at last forced out of an iron cylinder by a piston all ready to be made into loaves for the oven. While the engine is doing all this multifarious work with one hand for the clay ovens, it is doing a similar work with the other for those of the common household. Behind a thin partition it is grinding grists of wheat and other grain for the farmers around, and for the proprietor of the works, who purchases enough to keep the mill running when local wants cannot do it. The partition wall is dust-tight, so that there is no possible transfusion of the clay on one side into the flour on the other; and "Mal y soit qui mal y pense" may be truly said of him who suspects a gritty association of these two elements incompatible with well-leavened bread. The ovens or kilns are of prodigious capacity, and the heat necessary to produce bricks almost as hard as cast-iron, is equal to that of the furnaces in which that metal is fused from the ore. One of these is a smaller oven, in which a little batch of two or three thousand of any pattern may be baked at the shortest notice to supply a special order. The long kneading sheds and the operations within them attracted our particular and almost painful attention. The domestic simile I have carried through this notice was justified by what we saw

here. What woman is to dough in a private household, she is to clay in these sheds. Whether the wives and daughters of Israel under the Pharaohs were also consigned to this unwomanly work in the brick-yards of Egypt, is a question which the Scriptures do not enable us to decide. If they were not sentenced to the same toil as their husbands and brothers, then the brick-makers of The Black Country have improved upon the industrial ethics and economy of the Egyptians, and availed themselves of the cheapness and necessities of female labour, in producing the building material of the country. A writer, who visited the different brick-making establishments of the district, estimates that seventy-five per cent. of the persons employed are females; and perhaps two-thirds of these are young girls from nine to twelve years of age. We saw one set of these hands at work at the moulding bench, and watched with special interest the several parts they performed. A middle-aged woman, as we took her to be from some dress indications of her sex, was standing at the bench, butter-stick in hand. Apparently she had on only a single garment reaching to her feet. But this appearance may have come from her clothes being so bespattered and weighted with wet clay that they adhered so closely to her person that it was as fully developed through them as the female form of some marble

statues through the thin drapery in which they are clad by the sculptor. She wore a turban on her head of the same colour; for only one colour or consistency was possible at her work. The only thing feminine in her appearance was a pair of ear-drops she wore as a token of her sex and of its tastes under any circumstances. With two or three moulds she formed the clay dough into loaves with wonderful tact and celerity. With a dash, splash, and a blow one was perfectly shaped. One little girl then took it away and shed it out upon the drying-floor with the greatest precision to keep the rows in perfect line. Another girl, a little older, brought the clay to the bench. This was a heavier task, and we watched her appearance and movements very closely. She was a girl apparently about thirteen. Washed and well clad, and with a little sportive life in her, she would have been almost pretty in face and form. But though there was some colour in her cheeks, it was the flitting flush of exhaustion. She moved in a kind of swaying, sliding way, as if muscle and joint did not fit and act together naturally. She first took up a mass of the cold clay, weighing about twenty-five pounds, upon her head, and while balancing it there, she squatted to the heap without bending her body, and took up a mass of equal weight with both hands against her stomach, and with the two burdens walked about

[redacted] an inch could [redacted] added to her stature in all the working days of her life. She could only grow at night and on Sundays.

Each moulding woman has two, sometimes three, of these girls to serve her, one to bring the clay, the other to carry away the bricks when formed. What may be just, but equally unfortunate, they are generally her own children if she has any of suitable size and strength; but, for lack of such, she employs the children of equally unfortunate mothers. Whether in cruel or good-natured satire, they are called *pages*, as if waiting upon a queen. And she, perhaps, is the most directly aimed at in this witticism. Some irreverent wag, looking at her standing by her four-legged throne, with her broad wooden sceptre in her hand, and her yellow turban on her head, might call her the Sultana of Edom, or the queen of red clay, and not travel far from

she is paid 2s. [redacted]
she pays about 2s. per day to the girls that serve her; so she can really earn large wages at this man's work, when well hardened to it, with requisite skill. Indeed she has the easiest task of the three at the moulding bench. For there is really but little heavy lifting or tiresome bending for her to do. She stands upright, and has only to handle a small lump of clay at a time; while the girl that supplies her moulds has to bring on her head and in her arms 30,000 lbs. of clay daily, in loads averaging fifty pounds each. For the brick when formed weighs eleven pounds.

The proprietor of the establishment was exceedingly courteous to us, and showed us every department and operation, and answered any question with the greatest good-will, and we have no doubt he is as thoughtful towards his hands as the other brick manufacturers in the

Leaving this scene of motley labour, so novel and strange to an American eye, we continued our walk to Halesowen, an ancient town squatting down among the hills on the little Stour. Here hammers, from a thousand pounds to one in weight, make the picturesque valley echo with the heavy bass and sharp treble of their music night and day. The click of the nail-makers rather predominates in these iron voices of labour. The sun was fast declining in the west, so there was less time than I could have wished for visiting these little domestic workshops. We called in at one, however, and had a long talk with the woman at her anvil. She was the head of the establishment, and a cheery, pleasant-spoken mother of four children, two of which were twins. One of these she had set upon a piece of canvas on her forge, and it was looking very attentively at

> "The burning sparks that fly
> Like chaff from a threshing-floor."

Her husband was a collier, and she alone carried on the nail-making in the little shop, which is an apartment or addendum to every nailer's house as much as his kitchen. She could only be four days of the week at the forge, because, as she said, she had to "fettle" about the house, washing and mending for the family and doing other wife's work. Indeed, she remarked that

she sometimes thought that what was gained in the shop was lost in the house. She could only earn between three and four shillings a week at the anvil; but that was a great help to them, and helped out her husband's wages. One of her elder children, a girl of seven years, came in and we asked her if she could read. The little thing looked up brightly and said she was learning, and could already do some short words. The mother observed that she was determined that her children should have a little schooling, for she had seen the want of it herself. She had been set to work with the hammer when only eight years old, and had never been able to learn to read since.

I always love to walk about in the villages of the nail-makers. The clinking of hundreds of their little hammers supply the *aria* to the great concerts and oratorios of mechanical industry. They are poorly-paid and have to work long and hard to earn bread in competition with machinery. Indeed, it shows the superabundance and exigencies of labour that nails should be made at all by hand at this late day of mechanical improvements. But thousands of families in this district have inherited the trade from several generations of their ancestors, and they are born to it, apparently with a physical conformation to the work. Then thousands of cottages are equally conformed to

it in their structure. For each has a little shop-room attached to it generally under the same roof. Thus the whole business becomes a domestic industry or house employment for the family, and frequently every member, male or female, young or old, has his or her rod in the fire all the day long and often far into the night. Although they earn but little, they earn it at home, and the whole social operation and aspect of their industry is rather interesting. These little house-shops are scattered far and wide over the district, sometimes in little villages and hamlets, but often on high and breezy hills and behind the hedges of green and rural lanes. So they in the majority of cases really make comfortable little homes for honest and contented labourers, far better and more morally healthy than most of the tenements of better-paid mechanics in large towns. It is for this and similar reasons, and even without any intelligible reason, I always love to visit their busy hamlets and hear the music of their little clicking hammers, which do not disturb the birds, but seem to set them singing around the lowly roofs and cosy little gardens of the nailers with extra glee. Then sometimes you see potted flowers not only in the window of the living-room of the cottage but also in that of the forge-room, and other signs of comfort and social enjoyment. Perhaps this favourable impression of their condition I am now

expressing may be a little enhanced by the immediate contrast with that of the female brick-makers I have noticed. Still, compared with many forms of congregate or factory labour, the nail-makers, even with their small earnings, are quite on an even footing as to physical comfort and moral surroundings.

The nail-maker pays on an average *2s. 6d.* a week for his cottage and shop. He must find his own tools, which are rather simple and few in number. His anvil is generally a small piece of hardened steel driven into a cast-iron block, and not more than twice as large as the face of his hammer. As he and his family generally make only one size of nails all their lives, he needs only one heading-tool to each hammer. He utilizes every square foot of space at and around his forge. If he and his wife or daughter are the only members of his family to use it, he often lets one or two *stalls* to his neighbours for *8d.* each per week. That is, for this rate of rentage he lets a neighbour heat his rod in the same fire and make nails on the other side of the forge. I have seen four girls of about sixteen years of age standing around the same forge at once, each with her rod in the fire. The coal used must be lighter and more smokeless than the common sea-coal, which is apt to form a crust over the fire, which does not admit small rods easily.

They, therefore, use a kind of coke, or what they call *breezes*, but which doubtless should be spelt *brisées*, or broken bits of coal that has already passed through the fire. They pay from *6d.* to *7d.* per sack for these *brisées*, each sack containing three bushels. The nail-master or merchant furnishes the iron in bundles to the nail-maker, weighing sixty pounds each, and allows him from six to twenty-eight pounds for waste per bundle, according to the size of the nails; the largest size, of course, wasting less iron per pound produced. The nailer has to run his own risk as to the quality of iron furnished him. Sometimes several rods will be almost useless.

The hand-made nail trade has been sadly depressed for nearly half a century, and from various causes. First, the competition with machinery has greatly diminished the production of the hammer, as well as depressed its price. In 1830 it was estimated that about 50,000 persons were employed in the manufacture; whereas, the present number thus employed is put at 20,000. The earnings of a family of man, wife, son or daughter will possibly average about twenty shillings per week, out of which they must pay for their coal, and the extra rent charged for their shop. Many skilled and industrious men will earn this amount alone without other labour; but perhaps one pound a week would be a fair

average, taking year after year, for the earnings of each family. The nailers have "struck" for higher wages frequently, and endeavoured to win them by virtue of self-imposed suffering; but apparently in this age of machinery and cheaper foreign labour, there is but little improvement possible. In the United States almost every kind of what we call "wrought," or hand-made nail has disappeared. Even our horse-nails, which most need to be hammered, are coming to be produced largely by machinery. Then cheap and abundant as is hand labour in England, in every other country in Europe it is cheaper. Especially the competition of Belgian operatives presses more and more heavily upon the English workman in the nail trade. In 1851, it was estimated that they produced hand-made nails to the amount of from eight to nine thousand tons per annum, and it is said to have been increasing since that time. The manufacture of tea-chest nails used to be a large business in itself for this district; but machinery has greatly cheapened and monopolized their production. Before 1830 the East India Dock Company contracted for about ninety tons of hand-made tea-chest nails annually; but now they order but a small quantity.

The *truck* system was another screw that was turned down with relentless cruelty upon the poor nailer's earnings. This differs from what is called

the *order* system in America. Here the manufacturer set up a grocery, provision, or beer-shop, frequently on his own premises, and paid the nail-makers in his own "spurious coin," or in articles on which he charged a profit up to the uncertain limitations of his own conscience. Parliament has endeavoured to put a stop to this practice; but it is difficult to suppress it in another form. Small dealers, "on their own hook," continue to intercept the nailers' small earnings, by taking advantage of their pressing necessities. A writer thoroughly acquainted with their present condition and habits, states that "Numerous workmen prefer to sell their nails at the truck-shop every day, and in many instances at every meal. It is a well-known fact that, at present, more than one-half of the hand-made nails are paid for in 'truck;' but such nails are of very inferior quality, thereby injuring the *prestige* of the English hand-made nails in foreign markets."

As no one can know the operation of this truck system better than a nailer himself, I subjoin an extract from a letter written by one of the craft on the subject. It will serve as a good average specimen of their literary ability as well as a statement of the grievance; and as such it is given *literatim.*

"The question will naturally be asked what is the cause of all this Poverty and Distress in the Trade. I answer to a vast extent

the truck system which is a nefarious Robbery to the Workman and a Disgrace to the trade. This Worm has Been gnawing at the Root a great Number of years till he has assumed the Form of a giant. When the Workman goes to the Warehouse of this monster, he has to submit to an extra Balance on the Weight side, and sometimes he Robs him of his tale, a Practice known only too well by the Workman. He comes to the Books and then he has to suffer very often another injustice. Having done this business there, he as to Find his Way to the tommy shop, and there he meets the giant, Who compells him to Buy his tommy at ten sometimes fifteen per cent. above market Price and of inferior quality. Some places this giant keeps a Public house, and then the Workman is Highly Blessed when seduced into the tap-room and is Riddled again. He tells him he must come on Monday for his Iron (another trick). He goes accord.ngly to order, but no Iron—you must go into my castle and have some beer to-day. So Monday is done. He applys on Tuesday—very often none that day. He is like the Fly and the Spider which he cannot extriçate himself from. He is Bound hand and Foot by this modern Goliah.

"I don't say that all tommy Masters keep Public houses—they do not, but a portion of them. Some are more humane than others. Now this Class of men have found their way into the market and are underselling our honourable, Ready money Paying Masters, and Ruining the trade. The question is asked What is to be done to save the trade from Destruction. If a Workman lays an information he is looked upon as a Rogue and Vagabond, in the mean time he is Protecting his Fellow Workmen as well as himself. I ask now is there any Wonder that Poverty and distress exists in the Nail trade. Our Government have made a law, but that law has failed to meet the Requirements Demanded by the trade, there is so many intricacies. We have officers of Excise and Inspectors of Nuisances and yet not an Inspector of tommy Shops to see that the law as it now stands is carried out to the very letter and crush and annilate this abominable and nefarious traffic which is bringing Hundreds to a Premafure grave and is a Disgrace to the Nation."

It is almost painful to see how patient human labour clings to a sinking industry, as drowning

men to the last rope and plank of a wrecked ship. These changes must come, but thousands must suffer in the transition. It is probable that all the nails now made by hand in this district will be manufactured by machinery twenty-five years hence. Temporary distress and poverty must attend the change, but it will work well for another generation.

The church of Halesowen is truly a venerable old structure, with five or six centuries chronicled in its outer walls. It is a kind of arch-deaconal cathedral over which Archdeacon Hone presides. The great burial-yard which surrounds it holds an unwritten census of the dead outnumbering the living population of the town. In its low forest of monuments we found a plain slab bearing this simple inscription:

"WIL. S. SHENSTONE,
OB. II FEBRUARY, 1763,
ÆT. 49."

Under this humble stone sleeps the dust of one of England's most favourite and favoured poets. In the church, close to the pulpit, a more elaborate and ornate monument is erected to his memory, bearing a poetical tribute to his worth, in which the various qualities of his genius and character are given in rather happy verse for monumental literature. It is rather remarkable that *wit* in his

day, and in that before him, was numbered even on the tombstone of a writer or statesman as one of the first graces of human intellect.

But near this monument to the poet is another which is really a fuller testimony to his worth and its appreciation. It is the largest and most elaborately sculptured tablet in the church, erected to the memory of a Maj. Halliday, who once occupied Shenstone's mansion, and made it the central and culminating merit of his life, as inscribed in his long epitaph, that he kept the poet's grounds as a sacred trust and as he left them. He seemed to have felt himself honoured by the charge, as if it were a national trust confided to his keeping.

The sun was looking its last half hour upon the scene as we reached the Leasowes, and ascended the winding walks over stream and pool and under overarching trees, which the artistic poet laid out with so much genius and taste more than a hundred years ago. Our imagination was stimulated naturally to picturesque conception, and if the grounds were not all we could have fancied, we were confident they were that and more in the poet's day. It was evident that men had occupied them who could not honestly have written on their monuments what Maj. Halliday's epitaph stated to the reader in Halesowen Church. Grounds which had been lawns of exquisite surface and verdure had been found more profitable for

pasturage of cows as well as sheep, and now presented that warty, humpy surface of cropped and uncropped herbage which such grazing always produces without the requisite attention in early spring. Still, we could trace the artistic contour of the estate, the plan of the trees, fountains, cascades, the east and west windows in the woods and groves for views of distant landscapes. The open grounds were not pastured all the way up to the door-stone of the house, but between it and the rough space allotted to sheep there was a real lawn of considerable size, pretty well kept, with a fountain in the centre, and walks in good order. The house itself is of moderate dimensions, with outside walls of what some call dash-and-splash work, or a coarse brick surface rough-cast with small pebbles and sand and then painted. In a word, it was a comfortable looking mansion, which a prosperous ironmaster would be satisfied with for its intrinsic worth and convenience as a residence; though if building anew he would make the two storeys higher between joints. Ascending to the eastern boundary of the grounds, we sat on a stile and looked down over the estate and to the world beyond, and discussed the groundwork of the poet's predilection for this site on which to concentrate his taste, genius, and fortune. He was born in Halesowen in 1714, and this was his paternal estate. A natural attachment to the locality

was doubtless one strong motive in the preference. Then The Black Country was not so black and noisy in his time as now. The valley of the Stour, lying between his mansion door and the grand old spire of the parish church, did not send up the thunder of such heavy hammers, nor such thick dun clouds of coal smoke. The industries of the district sounded more like the chirruping of crickets on cottage hearths behind the tall hedges of the scattered village. Then the great distinctive features of his scenery were the softly-rounded Clent Hills just at the right distance to get that veil of misty blue that painters love to imitate on canvas. And at the western foot of one of those hills lived Shenstone's intimate friend and patron, the distinguished Lord Lyttelton, who was then a kind of central celebrity in the literary world, attracting into his companionship and circle of influence men who were making their mark and reputation as writers, painters, sculptors, actors, or as any other members of the universal brotherhood of the arts and sciences. It was perhaps the making of Shenstone that he lived when and where he did. He was brought out under the most auspicious circumstances, and found powerful helpers in each of the departments in which he won his reputation. As a poet, living and writing at the present day, his thoughts would have burned dimly under the luminous shade of Tennyson,

Browning, and Longfellow. His "Schoolmistress" is probably his only production that will live; as it is to all his other poems what Gray's "Elegy" is to the remembrance and reputation of that writer. The distinction he attained as a landscape and garden artist, indicates how common and tasteless must have been the best ornamental grounds in England when he first brought his genius to bear upon them. The parks of Hagley and Enville contain monuments erected to his memory by Lords Lyttelton and Stamford, which may testify to their appreciation of his work in laying out their grounds, in grouping trees, shrubbery, and flowers, and beautiful walks, pools, and fountains. If the best productions of his genius in this branch of art would fall far short of what hundreds of modern gardeners have accomplished in England, he was their teacher, and they never would have reached their present status if he had not preceded them when and how he did. For half a century after his death his reputation as what may be called a landscape architect was world-wide. One of the most striking and honourable tributes of respect to his genius was paid him by Fisher Ames, perhaps the most eloquent lawyer that New England ever produced. In his celebrated speech about sixty years ago in defence of Blennerhassett, who was mixed up in Aaron Burrs's great conspiracy, he gave a most graphic

description of the peace, innocence, and beauty of the Eden which that unfortunate Irishman had made for his home on the banks of the Ohio. This poetical description was one of the pieces that composed a reading-book for our schools, called "The American Orator;" and on special reading days, the boys in the first class were sure to compete with each other for this extract, on which to practise elocution. One feature of this little elysium into which "the serpent stole," was "a shrubbery that Shenstone might have envied." How we boys wondered who Shenstone was and where he lived, and what kind of shrubbery he really had around his garden! Then it made our voices quaver with emotion when the orator told us how Blennerhassett's young and lovely wife was driven out of their little Eden in the dead of winter, while "her tears froze as they fell."

If the poet saw many such sunsets in the year from his door as we witnessed from the rising ground overlooking his house from the east, they would account for his choice of locality. The Clent Hills were tinged with the rich purple mist in which the setting sun was sinking in the west. Neither of us ever saw it stand out in such fully-developed rotundity before. Instead of being apparently set in the face of the sky like an eye, it seemed to come out bodily, and to descend like a large round balloon, and we imagined we could

see the surface behind it, as plainly as behind a stereoscopic object. Linking fancy to fancy in their instantaneous flashes, Peter's vision was suggested, but instead of four-footed creatures coming down in a sheet looped up by the four corners, the imagination darted off to the figure of a vast hollow orb of sapphire filled with angels and illuminated with the light of their faces as they approached the earth on an evening visit. We verily thought it would alight between us and the Clent Hills, it seemed so near and balloon-like, and we watched it from the stile until they dropped their purple veil before it, and the ruddy Evening bade it "good night." We then turned our steps homeward and reached Harborne, where we reside as neighbours, about dark, having seen much that was enjoyable as well as suggestive of serious reflection.

## CHAPTER XI.

VISIT TO TONG CASTLE AND CHURCH—BOSCOBEL AND CHARLES'S OAK—CHANCES' GLASS-WORKS.

HAVING made so recently a walk among the muddy and sooty occupations of the brick-makers and nailers, I thought it would be an agreeable alternation for writer and reader to make the next excursion among rural and historical sceneries. So about the middle of November, on a day brimful of the rich glory of an autumn sun, Capern and myself mounted staff, and commenced our walk at the antique, interesting village of Shiffnal, which a traveller might think indigenous to Scandinavia both in name and aspect. But before he has walked half the length of one of its narrow and winding streets, he will find that the people speak English, and that the children are as young at five or ten as those of the most modern-looking town at the same age. Then there is a harmony in the whole aspect of the place which few villages of the same

size present in these latter days. The great centre structure is the massive old church, evidently the growth of centuries, standing in a graveyard probably containing more inhabitants than the living population can number. It is truly an impressive old building, wearing its venerable antiquity with hardly a court plaster of modern improvement to cover a wrinkle. And all the buildings near and around seem to have assimilated their faces to its aged countenance. You do not see here, as elsewhere frequently, a gray-headed patriarch of eighty in boy's clothes decked with bright buttons of brass or steel. But the old church stands up among many companions of its younger years—among which are several half-timber houses with their black beams carved by the best carpenter's genius two centuries ago.

After an hour's walk about the church and village, we started for that celebrated hiding-place of Charles II, Boscobel. Passed Aston Hall, a comfortable-looking mansion, that showed a comely and happy face in the setting sun-light. Two splendid chesnut trees stand like sentinels in front of the house, and their leaves had drunk in so much sunshine that the green had turned halfway to gold. In the park, near the road, stood the most perfectly symmetrical oak I ever saw, and nature alone had made its toilet. There was no sign of the woodman's axe, or hedgebill,

or any kind of artificial training. The whole contour of trunk and branches was all a connoisseur could wish or imagine. It resembled a head of red clover in full bloom. The base of the *entourage* was perfectly level, declining at no section of the circle. Indeed, no head of clover was ever set upon its stem more centrally. The spread was full forty feet in diameter, the leaves were well tinted but few had fallen; so that it made a perfect picture for an artist. The park wall for half a mile was of apparently hewn red sandstone laid in mortar, which would now cost a guinea a yard in America. Indeed, sixty rods of it would buy a large farm in Illinois. The road led through pleasant scenery, and was in itself a striking feature of the landscape. On each side was a wall of shrubbery, lined with firs in their perennial dress, and other trees in their autumnal foliage, mingling all the tints of the three seasons in a happy blending. The wild rose and the hawthorn, having no flowers to show, festooned the hedges with a thousand necklaces of their red bead-berries; so that with the silver glimmerings of white birch and other leaves that shone brightly in the grouping, the whole decked out November with a cheery adornment.

We soon came to a little white village, at some distance back from the road, and when abreast of it found that it was only a house with seven gables,

and of more ells and ends for men, and stables for horses of an indefinite number. It was a large educational establishment for training horses for the turf and chase. We were told that frequently more than twenty boys or pupil-teachers might be seen at once giving these high-bred animals morning lessons to fit them for their course of unproductive life. Near this training college was a large farm, belonging to Mr. Eyke, which seemed to have been very highly cultivated after the most improved methods. We noticed an unusual extent of land put to turnips. Field after field of them were being gathered, and acres covered as with great ant-heaps showed the luxuriant production of this root crop. These heaps were made with geometrical precision as to line and circumference, at but a few paces apart. We watched the process which was rather unusual. The turnips were first covered with dried fern leaves brought to the field in large wagon-loads; being a substitute for straw both as a matter of economy and of better material for the purpose. The whole was then covered with earth, dug up around the heap. A field of twenty acres covered with these little conical mounds makes a pleasant sight to man and beast, especially to the latter. We tarried so long at Shiffnal, and sauntered so slowly along the road afterwards, that it was nearly sun-down when we reached the little village of Tong. Finding it was

still three miles to Boscobel, and that there was slight prospect of getting lodgings there for the night, we concluded that a bird in hand was worth two in the bush, and were glad to turn into "The Bell," the only inn the pair of Tongs have between them; for there are two villages of that name adjoining each other. We found it a very comfortable house, and the host intelligent and ready and able to give interesting information on many subjects of inquiry. Then, although it was a prim two-story brick building in front, it had been set to an unique old cottage house, which perhaps did the state some service in the day and extremity of Charles II, when he was in this neighbourhood. We had the parlour of this little cottage section of the establishment all to ourselves. It had but one window, but that was bowed around the whole of the west end of the room. Then there was a genuine brick pavement for the floor, and the broad beam overhead was but nine inches above the mantel-shelf at the chimney end. On it stood a platoon of well-polished brass candlesticks on each side of their colour-sergeant, which was an old-fashioned crimping machine, or a candlestick of the same height, with its conical extinguisher brought to a right angle with the upright tube, like the top joint of a Thames steamer passing under a bridge. I never saw one before of the kind, and thought it a very simple and admirable

contrivance, and should like to see one of the old-fashioned grandmothers crimping her cap at it. In addition to flowers in the bow window, and the brass candlesticks standing on the mantel-piece, one whole side of the room was hung with brilliant parts of two or three harnesses, making a considerable show of silver-plated ornaments. In a word, it was as unique a room as an amateur of such characteristics could wish to meet with in any English wayside inn. So we enjoyed our tea-supper with a relish which our walk alone would not have given to it.

Having the whole evening on our hands, we sauntered out to see the village of Tong and its church by night. We soon overtook a roadful of the living victims of the shambles clattering along, in happy unconsciousness of their fate, to the butcher. What a happy provision in their nature that these honest-eyed, innocent creatures are never visited with thoughts of their future; that no presentiment of Smithfield, or of any other butcher's field of slaughter, ever troubles a moment of their short lives either in the pasture or on the road to the axe or the knife! It was an average detachment, consisting of well-fed sheep and young bullocks and heifers, the latter leading the way and always inclined to take the wrong one when a cross-road was reached. It was quite dark, but Capern caught a glimpse of several real

Devonshire heifers leading the van. He knew they were Devonshires; he could tell them by their breath, and he dashed through the sheep to pull one of them by the ear "for auld lang syne." But the coy heifer, not gifted with the intuition he claimed to himself as a Devonshire man, declined his caressing pinch of the ear, and darted aside, giving the Devonian poet an admonitory switch with her tail. The drover, too, an intelligent young man, was proud of his Devonshires, and said his master, Sir Thomas Bowher, kept no other cattle on his estate.

As the tired herd moved too slowly for us, we made our way gently through them and walked on to the village. We found it fast asleep in the dark, with scarcely a light to be seen at eight o'clock. The gate of the churchyard was open, however, and we felt our way up the walk with a staff, and traced out the contour of the old church up as far as the roof. Its windows had no speculation in their cold and silent eyes; and one could hardly fancy that the departed spirits of the slumbering families entombed within those walls would wish to visit by night that still and solemn darkness. Still our nature is human in spite of philosophy, and we had to confess to each other a little of the old boyhood feeling about ghosts as we put our faces to the windows and tried to recognize objects within. After making

a walk through the village without meeting man, woman, child, or dog, we returned to "The Bell." On our way we witnessed a phenomenon which we should have missed if we had remained indoors for the evening. We found ourselves, apparently, midway between two vast burning prairies. Their red and rising flames seemed to be approaching us from the east and west. Both horizons were lighted half-way up the heavens with the lurid waves, which arose and fell and twisted and crested themselves with the fleecy clouds. The sight was really sublime when invested with the fancy that we were between two vast prairie fires gradually nearing each other and consuming the intervening space. But it was only the nightly performance of the Eastern and Western Lights of the two black countries of Staffordshire and Shropshire. The two great armies of furnaces and forges were apparently drawn up in lines *vis à vis,* but not in hostile array. It was a mere field-night of their practice; and all the parks of their heavy ordnance fired only blank cartridges into the heavens. Still, no performance at Aldershott or Vincennes could equal the spectacle which we witnessed from the green border-land between these two regions of fire and smoke that seem marching against each other with all their unlimbered artillery and lighted matches by night.

In good season next morning we set out on our day's walk and exploration. The weather was beautiful, and all the scenery was rich with the golden glory of autumn. We went first to Tong Castle, a large, turreted, Tudor-like mansion, standing back from the road about a third of a mile. It seemed at first sight from this distance a misnomer to call it a castle in a fortified sense or position, for it apparently stood in a great and level meadow flanked with park trees. But as we approached we found that it was girdled by a water-wall more insurmountable in its day than a steep and lofty precipice of rock. A little artificial river had been brought from a long way off in a channel that deepened and widened as it neared the castle. Whether nature had helped the work or not, it must have been a prodigious undertaking and achievement in its day. Two rivers seemed to have been united before the west front of the building, forming a crescent basin or bay deep enough, when full, to float a frigate. The water had just been drawn off, and loads of fish of almost every name and size known to inland rivers had been taken. Pike or pickerel as large as the stoutest floppers caught in Lake Ontario had been left stranded and splashing in the mud. Although the castle must have once been nearly surrounded by one or two artificial rivers, we found the channel on the south side for

a long distance not only dry, but overgrown with trees which must have been a century old. Some of the grandest beeches I ever saw lined the walks above this deep ravine. And several of the largest trunks were fluted and twisted like some of the pillars in Durham Cathedral. At the head of the ravine and almost on a level with the bottom of it was a little stone cabin set into the side of the declivity, and called the "Hermitage." The cell had two apartments, and a tall man could scarcely stretch himself on the floor of either except diagonally. Here a fanatic, by name Smith, lived invisible for several years, and tested all the romance of a hermit's life in this damp, dark, miserable hole, when he emerged into the broad light of the sun and into the sight and companionship of his fellow-men. But he was succeeded in the tenancy of this wretched place by a poor weakly man with a wife and several children, who when lying down must have covered every square foot of the floor of both apartments. Here the poor man died, and was lifted up from among his pale and sickly children and carried to the common hermitage of the grave, and had as large space allotted to his last sleep as the lord of Tong Castle occupies in the churchyard.

The gateway of the park is one of the most elaborately carved works of the kind that I ever saw. The pillars and façade on each side must

have cost the sculptor several years of assiduous labour. The cords and their tassels were done to the life. And a bee-hive, with bees as lightly winged as they can be in stone, are good specimens of carving. But, what was as useful as interesting, the old castle preceding the present structure was literally lithographed with every tower and turret by the chisel in the face of one wing of the wall that flanks the gateway. George Durant bought the castle and estate of the Pierrepont family in 1764, it is said out of the loot of Havannah, embracing a vast amount of ladies' jewelry, plate, and other private personalties which proved that British wars in the West as well as in the East Indies, were carried on pretty much on the same footing. But, as no property in the world is so apt to take to itself wings and fly away so suddenly and so far as possessions thus won, this Durant realized much of the natural experience of such riches. One night a wing of the castle was blown up by gunpowder, it was always supposed, by one of his own sons. Still, he must have been a man of cultivated taste, as the grounds, walks, and trees of the park, and a great variety of picturesque embellishments amply prove. The Earl of Bradford is now the owner of the estate, and the castle has become the summer residence of two Wolverhampton gentlemen who occupy it by turns.

Tong Church! Did one in five hundred of all

the Americans who have visited Haddon Hall in Derbyshire ever visit this village Westminster Abbey of all the Vernons? It is doubtful. It is even possible that I am the first and only American who ever saw it. Even a man well read in the general history of the country will be astonished on entering this miniature cathedral, for such it is and looks in its interior and exterior aspects. In the first place, it is doubtful if any other village or provincial church in England contains within its walls so many beautiful and costly monuments to the memory of so many noble families as this little Westminster. You see here how and when these various families intersected with each other in wedlock and interweaved the new branches they put forth as the result of the union. Here you may read their histories, their graces, and virtues if you can decipher monumental Latin. The first and probably oldest tomb is that of Sir Fowke de Pembrugge (Pembroke?), who died in 1408, not quite a century before America was discovered. He was the last of his long line who owned Tong Castle and reigned lord of the manor. The Haddon Hall Vernon, Sir William, married his daughter and heiress and her inheritance at Tong. He died in 1460, as an inscription on his brass tomb opposite the pulpit affirms. A little further on toward the later centuries we see how and when another family was grafted into the Pembrugge-

Vernon stock, or that of the On-Stanley-on branch of English aristocracy. Sir Thomas Stanley married a Vernon and died in 1576. Few monuments even in Westminster Abbey equal the tomb of this member of the Stanley family. He lies side by side with his Lady Margaret, and both effigies are as lifelike as the best sculptor could make them in marble. His hair is black, and face, form, and armour are vividly human in appearance. The imagery, embracing symbols of every device and significance that the artist thought might illustrate the life and virtues of his subject, are exquisitely carved. Indeed, if any mercenary standards may be applied to such works, such a monument would now cost at least £10,000 to produce it. On every hand stand these tombs wrought in marble, brass, or alabaster, erected to commemorate the different lords of Tong Castle and Manor. What may be taken for the "Henry Seventh's Chapel" of this little Westminster is the "Golden Chapel" built by Sir Henry Vernon for his tomb and memory. He and his lady lie in effigies on their backs with devotional aspect, as if their marble lips were petrified in the middle of a prayer. He died in 1515; and yet hardly any feature of this beautiful little chapel has been defaced by time or man. Its delicate ornamental work is bright and radiant with its original gilding.

There are seventeen of such monuments in the

chancel, around the pulpit, and in this Golden Chapel, several of which are of the highest rank of sculpture. The inscriptions are also of an order of merit far above the average standard of epitaphic literature. The tomb of the youngest bears a proud tribute to the blue blood of the Norman. Elizabeth Pierrepont dies at the age of eleven, "the pride of her parents, the joy of her family, the only daughter of Gervaise Pierrepont, Esq., Lord of the Manor of Tong, the grandson of Robert Pierrepont, Earl of Kingston, a gallant soldier who fell a victim to his loyalty in defending King Charles I from his rebellious subjects. He was a descendant of Robert Pierrepont, a companion in arms of William the Conqueror, and whose family is still extant in Normandy."

The foregoing is a sample of historical information that these monuments impart to the reader. See how much of it is condensed in this tribute to a girl who died at the age of eleven. It would give additional interest to the thoughtful reader of these "testimonals to departed worth" if he could really believe that it was recognized and respected in the lifetime of the deceased. Here they are all brave, pure, generous, and good. Here are two of the eight lines dedicated to William Skeffington, one of the old county names:

> "An esquire he was right hardye in the fealde,
> And faithful to his prince in quiet tyme of peace."

He died in 1550, and his monument stands on the left of the altar. On the right is that of his mother, Lady Davnsay, honoured with the same number of lines, one of which is—

"An ere to Blind, a lyme to Lame she was."

Sir William Vernon, once Military High Chancellor of England, and his Lady Margaret, and a family of twelve children have their figures engraven in brass plates set into a marble slab, all begging mercy instead of bragging of their virtues and riches and honours to living men. They appear to have been a devotional family in their day and way. Every visiter at Haddon Hall must remember the rude words cut deep into the stone over the right postern: "God save the Vernons!" Here Sir William says:

"God be praised for his mercies."

Lady Vernon:

"Jesus, son of David, be merciful unto us."

First child:

"Lord, I have lifted up my soul to thee."

Second child:

"Son of God, remember me."

Third child:

"I have put my trust in the Lord, and he will deliver me."

Fourth child:

"Jesus, son of Mary, of thy pity be merciful unto us."

The epitaph of Sir Thomas Stanley is supposed to have been written by Shakespeare, who was not ten years old when that nobleman died. The evidence upon which this impression was founded is not very clear; perhaps it comes from some affinity to the sentiment and diction of "The cloud-capp'd towers" and so forth of the great poet. The half of the epitaph inscribed on the front of the monument reads thus:

> "Not Monumental Stone preserves our fame,
> Nor Skye-aspiring Pyramids our name,
> The memory of him for whom this stands
> Shall outlive Marble and Defacer's Hands;
> When all to Tyme's Consumption shall be given,
> Stanley for whom this stands shall stand in Heaven."

The Great Bell hung on the rudest frame in the tower is a rival in size and weight to the Big Tom of Lincoln, or the mellow thunderer of Westminster. It never could have been turned on its eccentric axis without throwing down the steeple. It was the gift of the Henry Vernon who built the Golden Chapel; and as the Latin inscription around the upper rim reads, "Caused this bell to be made 1518 to the praise of Almighty God, of the Blessed Mary, and of Saint Bartholomew."

The master of the village school, who had made the antiquities of the Church his study, accompanied us and described them with the lively interest of an amateur. He had collected a little

history of them, and deciphered and translated inscriptions which would cost even the best of scholars much time and trouble to make out. These, and extracts from Dugdale and other early authors he had transcribed in a manuscript book, which he generously loaned to me for the notice I wished to make of the building and its monuments. He took us to his school, which was a great stone martin-box standing on four posts, with a stairway at one end ascending to the door. The room was full of children, rural, ruddy, and happy as birds, and looked as much surprised on seeing such strangers step suddenly on to their perch. Our visit to this little village, which we seemed to have stumbled upon by accident, was very enjoyable and gave us the satisfaction of an unexpected discovery.

From Tong we continued our walk to the chief point of interest we had in view when we left home; or Boscobel. The weather continued fine, and we made our way first by cross-roads and by-paths, and then over meadow and pasture fields, until we came in sight of a green mound wearing a crest of tall lime trees. From this we had our first sight of that house so celebrated in English history and so vitally connected with the life-and-death crisis in the experience of Charles II. As we approached it, we saw "Charles's Oak" a few rods distant in a meadow adjoining the

garden. It is a thrifty middle-aged tree, perhaps of two centuries' growth, and may have come from an acorn of that monarch of the forest that sheltered Charles. This, then, was Boscobel, the scene of such romance, heroism, loyalty, and other noble qualities as will always command admiration even from those who condemn the cause in which such virtues are exercised. This was the theatre of a drama that makes a dating-event in the life of a nation. About break of day on Thursday morning, Sept. 4th, 1651, a small party on horseback rode up softly and silently to the White Ladies, a monastic mansion of the Giffard family, about half a mile from Boscobel. All the night long they had spurred their jaded horses along cross-roads and by-roads from the disastrous battle at Worcester. Cromwell's troopers were scouring the country, cutting down or capturing the fugitives, Scotch and English. One of these bands was close upon the heels of this flying party. "My kingdom for a covert, for a cave!" might well have been the cry of that man of the longest locks and of fretted and blood-stained insignia of royalty. Not a moment was to be lost in finding a hiding-place for the tired and hunted King. Colonel Roscarrock sent a servant boy of the house to Boscobel for William Penderel, and another was sent for Richard his brother, who lived near at Hobbal Grange. They were two of five

sturdy yeomen brothers, real hearts of English oak, men which "such another island" would not buy from their religion and their king, both of which were equally obnoxious to the Puritans. In a few minutes they were brought into the parlour by the Earl of Derby, who was one of the party, and introduced by him to their unfortunate sovereign, or rather inversely. The Earl pointed to Charles and said to William, "This is the King; thou must have a care of him, and preserve him as thou didst me." For the Earl of Derby had already tested the hospitality and security of Boscobel as a hiding-place, and it was he who recommended it to the King as they rode from St. Martin's Gate, Worcester, on the eve of that fatal battle. The Earl had raised a force in Lancashire in support of the royal cause, but he had been routed in an engagement with the Roundheads at Wigan. With the remnant of his troop he set out to join the royal army at Worcester, chased and harassed by Cromwell's bands which were scouring the country. When in this vicinity he heard of Boscobel, and here found a hiding and resting covert for a breathing space of time. He had tested William Penderel's fidelity and the security of a little apartment which had been constructed on purpose for concealing hunted persons, such as Popish priests when outlawed. To this refuge he had com-

mended the King, and to it they had journeyed all night long from Worcester. Whilst waiting for the arrival of the two Penderels, the King had been advised to rub his hands on the back of the chimney and then his face with them in order to disguise himself. Some one also cut off his long locks, and "His Majesty," says Thomas Blount, one of his faithful followers, "having put off his blue ribbon, buff coat, and other princely ornaments, put on a noggen coarse shirt of Edward Martin's, who lived in the house, and Richard Penderel's green suit and leather doublet, but had not time to be so exactly disguised as he was afterwards; for both William and Richard Penderel did advertise the company to make haste away, in regard there was a troop of rebels commanded by Colonel Ashenhurst quartered at Cotsall, but three miles distant; some of which troop came to the house within half an hour after the company were gone."

"Richard Penderel conducted the King out at a back door, unknown to most of the company, except some of the lords and Colonel Roscarrock, who waited on his Majesty into the back side, and there with sad hearts took leave of him." It must indeed have been an affecting moment for both parties. They mounted their horses, and rode off northward with the view of joining General Leslie, who was retreating with the main

body of the Scotch horse. But they were soon intercepted in front and rear, and the Earl of Derby, Lord Talbot, and several others were captured. The former was tried and executed at Bolton in the following month. Richard Penderel took the King into an adjacent wood belonging to Boscobel, called Spring Coppice, while his brothers William, Humphrey, and George acted as scouts, watching all approaches and signs of danger and reporting to the concealed fugitive from time to time whether the coast were clear or clouded. It was about sunrise when he was conducted into the obscurest part of the coppice, "when," says Blount, "the heavens wept bitterly at these calamities; insomuch that the thickest tree in the wood was not able to keep his Majesty dry, nor was there anything for him to sit on; wherefore Richard went to Francis Yates's house (a trusty neighbour who married his wife's sister), where he borrowed a blanket, which he folded and laid on the ground for his Majesty to sit on. At the same time Richard spoke to the goodwife Yates to provide some victuals and bring it into the wood at a place he appointed her. She presently made ready a mess of milk and some butter and eggs, and brought them to his Majesty in the wood; who being a little surprised to see the woman (no good concealer of a secret) said cheerfully to her, 'Good woman,

can you be faithful to a distressed Cavalier?' She answered, 'Yes, sir, I will dye rather than discover you;' with which answer his Majesty was well satisfied."

All the day long he lay wet and cold in this concealment, listening for the tread and tramp of his eager and relentless pursuers, who were scouring the country round for him. As the night came on he resolved to make his way into Wales, where he could better elude his hunters, taking brave and faithful Richard Penderel with him as guide. Before they set out on the long foot journey, Richard took him into his house at Hobbal Grange, where his old mother gladly assisted in giving the King a proper outfit for his flight. They turned him into a stout wood-chopper, carrying a wood-bill in his hands, and ostensibly looking for a job in that line of labour. *Wil. Jones* was the name he assumed, probably thinking it would serve him best in Wales. After taking a little refreshment, the best the old mother and young wife could set out upon their three-legged table, the two started about nine o'clock, resolved to go as far as Madeley that night, a place within a mile of the Severn. Richard had a trusty friend residing in this village by the name of Woolf. Before reaching his house they met with a serious and dangerous mishap. On passing Evelin Mill, Richard accidentally let a

gate clap to loudly, whereupon the miller, who was a loyalist and had served noble refugees from the Worcester battle with him, rushed out and shouted, "Who is there?" Richard not knowing the miller's politics, dashed off with the King over a little brook which they were obliged to wade through. This made walking painful to the King, as his shoes were filled with water and gravel. The night was very dark, and, as he oftentimes pleasantly remarked, he would have lost his guide had it not been for the rustling of Richard's calfskin breeches. They arrived at Woolf's house in Madeley about midnight, and Richard knocked them up from their beds. The daughter came first to the door, and without a moment's hesitation as to her loyalty, he told her the King was there, who was immediately welcomed to their fireside. After some refreshment, they resolved themselves into a committee of ways and means, and discussed the best mode of escape. The Parliamentary bands guarded the Severn at various points, and some of these troopers had quartered recently at Woolf's house. It had no place of concealment that could be trusted, and the King was in greater danger than at Boscobel. So as it was very unsafe for him to lie down to sleep in the house, they took him into the barn, and made him a bed on the hayloft. There he continued all next day, while

Richard and Woolf kept guard and watch. The latter sent a trusty servant to coast up and down the Severn, to see if it might be crossed without danger, but he found that not only all the bridges were secured but all the boats seized, and the strictest watch kept up along the river to intercept the royal fugitive and his companions. Thus the way to Wales was thoroughly barred against him. The only alternative left was to retrace his steps to Boscobel. So, when darkness settled down again upon hunted and hunters, he was taken again into Woolf's house and prepared for his return journey. A part of this preparation was to discolour his hands more fully with walnut tree leaves, which Mrs. Woolf rubbed upon them until they looked more like a real woodman's. At about eleven o'clock, when all was still and dark, the King and Richard stole out of the back door and stepped off into the night with low-whispered thanks to the host of the farm-house at parting.

They reached the wood at Boscobel about three o'clock on the morning of Saturday, and there Richard left his charge whilst he went stealthily to reconnoitre about the house to see if it was free from soldiers and other dangers. He found in it another fugitive guest, Colonel William Carlis, who, Blount says, "had seen the last man killed at Worcester, and who had made his way to

Boscobel for concealment, as he resided in the neighbourhood and was an old acquaintance of William Penderel." Richard told him who was waiting in the wood for shelter and safety, and he and the two brothers went out and found the King sitting on the root of a tree, and conducted him into the house, where, says Blount, in his simple narrative, "He did eat bread and cheese heartily, and William Penderel's wife made his Majesty a posset of thin milk and small beer, and got ready some warm water to wash his feet, not only extreme dirty but much galled with travel. The Colonel pulled off his Majesty's shoes, which were full of gravel, and stockens which were wet, and there being no other shoes in the house that would fit his Majesty, the good wife put some hot embers in those to dry them, whilst his Majesty's feet were washing and his stockens shifted."

And now comes the most touching scene in this bitter experience, and I wonder no painter has made it a subject for his canvas. After the long night walk from Madeley with soaked shoes full of gravel, the Boscobel house was deemed unsafe even for an hour's sleep in a garret bed. So, after his bread and cheese, the King was conducted back into the wood, where William and Richard helped the two wearied and hunted fugitives up into "a thick-leafed oak," and raised

up to them some more bread and cheese. They also brought a cushion for the King to sit on. "And the Colonel humbly desired his Majesty (who had taken little or no rest the two preceding nights) to seat himself as easily as he could in the tree and rest his head on the Colonel's lap, who was watchful that his Majesty should not fall, and in this posture his Majesty slumbered away some part of the day, and bore all these hardships and afflictions with incomparable patience."

This unaffected description presents a picture which an eminent artist might paint to the life. The imagination does it involuntarily. Who cannot see it? The rising sun throws it into vivid perspective. In the encircling arms of the oak, on its gnarled shoulders, are nestled the two men. Remember the garb of Charles—the coarse noggen shirt of Martin the servant, and Richard Penderel's leather doublet, his face still begrimed with soot, and his hands stained with walnut leaves by goodwife Woolf at Madeley. Not two consecutive hours of sleep had closed his eyes since the morning of that disastrous battle at Worcester. Two nights long he had been walking in the cold and rain, wet and wearied. There he now sits in the tree with his head in his companion's lap, who is keeping his eyes and ears open to every sight and sound, though both are heavy and longing for rest. "To be or not to be—perchance to dream." The

outlawed King is dreaming now; a painter would catch the dream playing upon that pallid cheek. Why not catch it? The world would recognize and interpret it. Not one of all the pictures that have been painted of "Charles Stewart" would produce such an impression.

When the night came on with "the blanket of the dark," the fugitives returned to the house, and William Penderel put the King to rest in that large square chest at the lid of which we now stood. It is a kind of false apartment several feet square, with an eye seemingly closed to the lower lid, but admitting a little light and just a glimpse of the outside world to the inmate. It is a kind of hollow notch over a buttery or some culinary apartment, with only an entrance on the top through one of the floor-boards, which makes such close joint with the rest that no one would suspect that it was not nailed as fast to the joist as they. Here William Penderel had put the Earl of Derby on his retreat to Worcester. Here doubtless he had concealed many other fugitives before the Earl; for it was built for the express purpose of hiding the hunted. The King found this place of rest and concealment both easier and safer than the oak, and he began to breathe freer from alarm. Says the same historian, "His Majesty, esteeming himself in some better security, permitted William Penderel to shave him, and cut the hair of his

head as short at the top as the scissors would do it, but leaving some about the ears according to the mode of the country. The King bade William burn the hair which he cut off, but William was only disobedient in that, for he kept a good part of it, wherewith he has since pleasured some persons of honor, and is kept as a civil relique."

But his sense of rest and safety was of short duration. On the very day that he was thus taken into the Boscobel house, Humphrey, one of the sturdy brothers, went to Shiffnal, only four or five miles distant, and there met "a Colonel of the rebels" who had just come from Worcester in pursuit of the King, and had heard that he had been at the White Ladies. As Humphrey lived in the immediate neighbourhood of that place, the Colonel examined him very closely, threatening the penalty denounced against any one who should harbour or conceal the King, and offering a reward of a thousand pounds for discovering him. But the stout-hearted yeoman stood fast to his loyalty, which braved threats and spurned a thousand pounds in his poverty as easily as a thousand farthings. So the Colonel could make nothing of him. But he might make all he wished of some one else with such threats and bribes. When Humphrey told the King on his return of his adventure at Shiffnal, he began to feel himself in an unsafe position, even with such faithful men

around him. That night, however, he enjoyed the luxury of sleeping on a pallet laid upon the floor of the secret apartment; and the old mother of the family, whom he called *My Dame Joan*, had served up some chickens for his supper, "a dainty he had not lately been acquainted with." The next day was Sunday, and he ventured out into the little arbour now standing, as it did then, on a mound in the garden. Here he sat and read, while the Penderel brothers were holding watch and ward at all the approaches to the house. In the meantime John had been sent to Moseley, about five miles from Boscobel, to apprise Lord Wilmot of the King's whereabouts and condition. But he had changed his quarters from Moseley to Bentley near Walsall, where he was the guest of Colonel Lane. It had already been arranged that he should go as a servant or companion to Jane Lane to Bristol, as she had obtained a pass from "the rebels" to make a journey to that seaport. Mr. Whitgreaves, the host at Moseley, went on with John to Bentley, and there it was planned that the King should be brought to that house of refuge and take Lord Wilmot's place on the saddle with Jane Lane.

On the same Sunday night, therefore, the King, being too footsore to walk, was mounted upon Humphrey's old mill-horse, taken from the pasture, "with a pitiful old saddle and a worse bridle."

The stout-hearted honest Penderels—William, John, Richard, Humphrey, and George—and their brother-in-law, Francis Yates, made his body-guard, each with a wood-bill or pikestaff on his shoulder, and some of them with pistols in their pockets. Two marched before, one on each side of the horse, and two at a little distance behind, determined to do or die in the King's defence should he be waylaid and attacked. It was near midnight when they set out on this hazardous march, and it was very dark and rainy. The old mill-horse was a lank, hard-boned, rough-going beast, and the King complained that "it was the heaviest dull jade he ever rode on." Humphrey, the owner, who was walking by his side, defended his faithful beast, it is said, in the smart rejoinder: "My liege! can you blame the horse to go heavily when he has the weight of three kingdoms on his back?" At Penford Mill, about two miles from Moseley, on the advice of his guides, the King dismounted, and they proceeded the rest of the way by a private and safer path, and reached the appointed meeting-place in a little grove near the house. Here the Penderels left their royal charge in the hands of Lord Wilmot and the others waiting to receive him. William, the special hero of the band of brothers, with Humphrey and George, had fallen back and were returning to Boscobel with the horse, unknown to the King and

without waiting to be thanked by him for a devotion and loyalty seldom equalled by any other example in English history. The other brothers, on coming up to the company awaiting him in the grove, and while he was kissing Lord Wilmot on the cheek, were also retiring without apparently expecting or wishing a word of thanks from the sovereign they had served so faithfully. But before they had got beyond hearing, he called them back and said: "My troubles make me forget myself: I thank you all." And he gave them his hand to kiss.

Blount's quaint and simple description of Charles's dress and appearance, when thus transferred to Lord Wilmot and his host at Moseley, presents a closing picture in these dissolving views of his personality. "His Majesty's attire was then a leather doublet, a pair of green breeches, and a jump coat (as the country calls it) of the same green, a pair of his own stockens with the tops cut off, because embroidered, and a pair of stirrop stockens which were lent him at Madeley, a pair of old shoes, cut and slashed to give ease to his feet, an old grey, greasy shirt of the coarsest linnen, his face and hands made of a reechy complexion by the help of the walnut tree leaves." He only remained one night at the Moseley house, and there ran into the most imminent peril of capture; for several soldiers bolted in, but found all the

doors so open and free, that they were deceived by this show of unconsciousness of fugitives, and left again without searching the apartments. The host, Mr. Whitgreaves, acted the innocent so naturally, and threw open his doors with such an easy and serene face, that he saved his sovereign from the fate of Charles I. From Moseley the King was conducted by night to Colonel Lane's at Bentley, and from thence escaped to France *via* Bristol, by that expedient which painters have so often portrayed on canvas.

As we stood by the open lid of the oaken box in which the hunted King was secreted in the Boscobel house, I could not but think of analogous experiences in the lives of some of his enemies when it came their turn to fly before him. Whilst looking down into that square hole, where he lay wearied in fitful sleep with his head against one wall and his feet against the other, it was easy and natural for the thought to dart across the ocean to the cave's mouth in the West Rock, at New Haven. In the tortuous recesses of those vaulted rocks, night after night and week after week, three of the judges that condemned Charles I to death hid themselves, while soldiers of the Restoration were hunting after them, as Cromwell's bands hunted Charles II up and down England. If the book is still extant, no better place could be found than Boscobel for reading "Style's

Judges." It would show proofs of devotion and self-sacrifice for the outlawed, hunted, hungry Whalley, Goffe, and Dickinson as brave, unswerving, and unselfish as the loyalty of the Penderels to their fugitive sovereign. It would disclose the same expedients for their security; how one stout-hearted woman had a false floor made, or two floors for her garret so deep between the joists that the three men might lie in it by night and day if need were; how she strewed the upper floor with reeds, and wiled away the soldiers from their frequent search; how the fugitive judges, when they transferred their hiding-place to the cave, were startled on the first night by two fiery eyes that glared at them more fiercely than any human pursuers could do, but felt relieved when they found that it was a panther instead of one of the soldiers of Charles II. I am sure that book would now have a wide reading in England, if republished here; for it is full of that romance of adventure, heroism, and fidelity which few modern novels present in their fictitious experiences.

Capern essayed to descend through the trap door into this apartment, but although many ladies had squeezed through the narrow passage, in all the amplitude of the late fashion, he, being less compressible, though not "more fat than bard beseems," stuck midway, and wriggled up again

with some difficulty. I had to rally him a little on a sesquipedality that would have lost Charles his kingdom and life. The house seems to have remained unchanged for two centuries, just as it was when it served as such a hiding-place for him in his desperate extremity. The large dining-room is wainscoted with oak, older than the one in which he slept with his head on Colonel Carlis' lap. The different scenes of his experience here are engraven in the black marble facing of the fireplace, and make well-executed pictures. In one he is represented in the tree with several troopers dashing about in search of him. In another he is on the old mill-horse on his way to Moseley, guarded by the Penderels with their axes and hedge-bills. A portrait of him, in all his long locks and royal robes, hangs over the mantel-piece, giving him a somewhat unhappy expression, as affected either by a presentiment or memory of his sharp troubles. In another apartment is the portrait of Cromwell himself, making him look as if he had just come out of the battle of Worcester and was regarding it as "a crowning mercy," which would have been more grateful to him if he had caught Charles. The old servant who showed us the various apartments facetiously remarked that he always locked the door between the two portraits at night lest they should get together and have a

falling out with each other. The arbour in which Charles sat and read on that memorable Sunday, stands on a mound several feet high in the garden, and looks as if it might have been half a century old when he occupied it. The tree called "Charles's Oak" must not only have come from a scion or acorn of the one in which he hid, but must be many rods nearer the house than the original, which was evidently in the middle of a dense wood or grove, and probably half-way between the Boscobel house and the White Ladies. The house is now owned by a family of maiden ladies residing in Derbyshire, by the name of Evans, who appreciate all its historical interest and preserve it for the public.

Having spent an hour at this corner milestone of English history, we continued our walk through Brewood, stopping to see the large church in that snug little town, which has a long and respectable history of its own. It is really an edifice worth not only stopping, but going some distance, to see; for it ranks for size, architecture, and lofty spire with the first class of provincial churches. It contains many ancient monuments of the leading families of the district, such as the Giffards, Fowkes, and Moretons. Brewood became a market town in 1221, under a patent given to Bishop Cornhill, of Lichfield, and ever since that day it has had a continuous population of all

ages, who have said their prayers under different religious regimes, and been recognized as a Christian community. It is enough to inspire a feeling akin to awe to walk the main street of such a little country town, and feel that you are treading in the footsteps of twenty human generations. Brewood has made its mark as an educational centre. A free grammar school was founded here by Dr. Knightley in the reign of Elizabeth, who with a small sum of money planted here an acorn which has produced a goodly tree of knowledge, from which many distinguished men have fed their minds to much growth and power. Among these Bishop Hurd, of Worcester, Dr. Beddoes, of Bristol, Sir E. Littleton, and others may be numbered. Rev. William Budworth, Dr. Johnson's friend, was one of the head-masters of this school.

On our way to the Spread Eagle station, where we were to take the train for Birmingham, we came out upon the famous Watling Street, that great road of the Romans. The construction of this solid highway must have been a powerfully civilizing work to the British tribes in England. And it is the only one of that hardy and industrial soldiery left on the island as a work of present utility. It was doubtless made by them to supplement the rivers for penetrating, subduing, and civilizing the country. From London on

the Thames and Uriconium on the Severn, the helmeted road-makers of the Roman legions evidently began this great thoroughfare; linking by it camp to camp until they met somewhere perhaps in Staffordshire or Warwickshire. The solidity and permanent character of this road illustrate Roman firmness and strength. It was not a *corduroy* road, such as the people of our Western States would make over their prairies and swamps. It was made to last for ages, as deep, compact, and solid as if it had been one of the ways leading out of Rome itself. Our host of The Bell, at Tong, said he had taken up a section of it at Oaken Gates, and found it like quarrying the solid rock itself. Many of the slabs of stone laid down were from three to four feet in length and two in depth. These were covered with rubble or broken bits of stone from the same quarry, and must have made a roadway as solid and as perfect as the best city streets of the present day. If the great governments and nations of Christendom could utilize their standing armies as Rome did, or set them to work upon roads, harbours, drainage, ship channels, and the like, the toiling myriads who have to support them would feel the burden lightened. Certainly the officers of the Roman legions, who superintended these utilitarian works, had as much right to magnify their order and assert its dignity as the

same rank of officers in modern armies. The day, let us hope, will come when the latter will be as proud of having perforated Central Africa or Asia with a Watling Street as with a pathway of fire and blood.

We reached the Spread Eagle station just a minute before the train for Birmingham arrived; an accidental coincidence, for we had no Bradshaw with us, and knew not how long we should have to wait at this point. This was one of our most enjoyable walks in the green border-land of the Black Country, and we returned home much richer in satisfaction than we had anticipated; for neither of us had heard anything of Tong church and its monuments.

The Glass Works of the Messrs. Chance constitute one of the most remarkable establishments in the world, both for extent and character of their operations and productions. They embrace a small, compact town of edifices difficult to represent in any familiar simile. If seen from a certain distance by moonlight, when quiet and smokeless, they might look to an imaginative eye like a great nest of cathedrals and Turkish mosques. You have all the features of both, with a little exercise of the fancy. Clustering in the moonlight, you will see lofty brick spires tapering all the way but not to a point; towers and turrets of all dimensions; conical domes

elongated at the top into a chimney, and other characteristics of the two classes of architecture. These buildings cover a territory of about twenty-four acres. The main street, that divides the domed and steepled town in two nearly equal parts, is the railway. This again is intersected by a canal, with its landings in the middle of the works; which have about a score boats of their own for transportation of the raw material and its wonderful productions when ready "for home and exportation." This may serve to convey some idea of the establishment when cold and silent. But when all aglow with its fiery industries, it presents a scene which Virgil and Dante would have described in terms and figures unsuited to modern conceptions or facts. As every man who pretends to have once been a boy was a bubble-blower in his childhood, whether he has seen the real process or not, he can understand how glass is made into such infinite shapes and uses. And boys, fresh from the sport of making and floating in the air their tinted globes, ought to have the clearest idea of the whole matter. It will be easy for them to see in their minds twenty-four boys standing in a circle, each with a long-stemmed tobacco pipe in a bowl of soapsuds, blowing up bubbles one after the other. Well, they will see that picture to the life in one section of these great works. But here the soapsuds are

red-hot and more too. The bowls are made of the Stourbridge fire-clay, and hold about two tons of the liquid, which is called metal. The pipes are iron, nearly as long as a fishing-rod. The bubbles they blow are perfectly marvellous. They weigh about thirty pounds each, and are from five to six feet in length. The whole operation seems like magic. Nothing in the working of other metals is like these strange manipulations. That is not the word for them, either, for the mouth seems to have more to do in the matter than the hand. Here are a score of men dipping their pipes into those terrible pots, taking up a ball of the red metal, and then blowing and twirling the bubble until it becomes a cylinder as long as a two-bushel bag of wheat. What a lung-power must be brought to bear upon the thousands of cylinders inflated here in a week! The human breath forced through all those iron pipes, if put in one volume, ought to be enough to propel a ship of the line across the Atlantic. Few artisans could have trained the measurement of the eye to such fine precision as these glass-blowers. To take up to an ounce the exact quantity of metal, then to blow and twirl it into a cylinder that shall not vary a hair's breadth from the requisite thickness and diameter, is a remarkable, almost unparalleled feat of skill.

The operations in making the "crown" glass are

the most strange and stirring. Whatever else suggested the name, it might well have come from the process itself. To have recourse to very common similes, divested of all technical terms, a mass of the molten metal about the size and form of a gourd is formed, with the rod in the stem. It is then thrust into a blazing oven whose mouth is terrible to front, and which would serve the men who attempted it as Nebuchadnezzar's furnace mouth did his servants, if they did not wear a shield before their faces. The red gourd shell is thrust into this roaring oven, and turned rapidly by the long iron stem. This motion soon opens a hole through the butt end of the shell, and it expands to a new size and shape at every revolution in the flame. Now it is a Scotch cap; the next half-minute it is a sailor's tarpaulin hat, very squat, mostly crown with but little brim. A few more turns, and it is all crown, whizzing around like a large circular saw without teeth. The stem is then detached, and it is lifted into an annealing oven and placed on its edge in an iron frame which holds a great number of them upright, seemingly as thick as herrings in a barrel, yet without touching each other. This is just a glance at the process of making "crown glass," and whoever sees it must think of a hat crown when he remembers the operation.

I wonder how many well-instructed men and

women in a thousand, excluding children, have the slightest idea that all the panes of glass in their windows were once as round as the body of a hat box. So it is, but few can make it a real, tangible fact without seeing the process. These cylinders average about four feet in length and two feet and a half in circumference. They are slit in the middle from end to end by what may be called a long-handled knife with a diamond blade or point. Then they go to the flattening furnace or oven where the heat is carefully graduated to their delicacy, and gently opens and lays them flat upon a large, solid even table of glass. On this the wavy or wrinkled plate is ironed or mangled out to a perfect surface by a wooden roll or block called a "polissoir." The manager of one of the departments of this great establishment, who is its "Ministre pour les Affaires Etrangeres," took me next into what might be called the cutting-up lofts. My time was too short to ask many questions and see all the operations and extent of the works. I have said they covered the area of twenty-four acres. But this is only the foundation surface, and only one third of real space covered by the multifarious manipulations. Most of the buildings are three and more stories in height; so if all the area occupied were brought down to one dead level, it would doubtless make sixty acres. And I should think full five acres of

this extent were occupied by these cutting lofts. Here are racks seemingly interminable and numberless, filled with plates of glass of all shapes and sizes, or what may be called glass slabs, many of them with broken corners, and rough-looking in dimensions. Along the whole length of each loft on both sides run the cutting benches, all manned by a battalion of workers, each with his rule and diamond-pointed knife, cutting up the sheets into panes of various sizes, making the most and best out of each. And here I learned a fact which illustrates the closer economy in utilizing odds and ends than once prevailed. The ten thousand little bits left over from this pane-cutting are made into slides for stereoscopic views, and find a large market for that use. Thus a scrap of glass from which a piece three inches by one can be cut is worked into a slide for the camera. In no other establishment in the world can one get such a full idea of the infinite uses which glass is made to serve as in these immense works. The artistic department, perhaps, will generally excite the greatest curiosity and admiration. This may be divided into two sections. One contains an acre of sheets of every tinting which all the rainbows or all the flowers that ever arched or graced the earth could supply. Indeed, the sight of them serves as a lesson in useful knowledge. After all one remembers of flower shews, he feels himself truly

surprised here, that so many tints and shades can be taken or formed from "the bridge of colours seven." This is the raw material that goes abroad, in every direction and to every distance, to be worked up in cathedral, church, chapel, and college, and other ornamental windows. Really the stock in store of this stained glass is so vast, that one might wonder why it should be sold by the square foot instead of the square rod. To estimate it by the foot seems almost like computing the national debt of Great Britain in milreis.

The other is the department in which the working artistry of the establishment is carried on. This is its Royal Academy, where more paintings are produced and exhibited in a year than in the National Gallery in London. They are done on glass instead of canvas, but are none the less artistic for that. The Raphael or Michael Angelo of this great studio has a salon by himself, in which he develops into outline and shape his conceptions. Here he passes before his eye all that Adam saw and named, and more too—all things that bloom and breathe with sweet odours in Nature's realm: the flowers of every zone; the birds of every land and plumage; every beast from the elephant to the winged mouse; every fish from the whale to the minnow of the thinnest brook; human histories reaching back to the holiest hours of Eden; pictures and dreams of angels. These

fields the artist-in-chief hunts up and down with his pencil for sketches which his well-trained corps in the painters' gallery are to reproduce on their glass-canvas. The pictures they produce in a year would make a Fine Arts Exhibition which would compete favourably with the portrait galleries of large cities. The popular taste and demand for these artistic windows are constantly increasing at home and abroad; perhaps more, proportionately, in foreign and even half-civilized countries than in Great Britain or America. Oriental princes and nabobs delight in this kind of ornamentation, especially in the hottest countries, where the glare of the sun most needs tempering. The windows for the salon cabin of the state barge of the Pacha of Egypt, especially, were perhaps as fine specimens of glass painting as the establishment ever produced.

A full and minute description of all the operations and productions of these great works would fill a volume; I can only notice a few salient facts and features. The Chances stand in a more than industrial relation to the community at home and abroad. They are great educators of taste and pleasant and beautiful perceptions. They popularize high art, carrying the people on from where Wedgwood left them to more refined ideals of beauty. And one thing they are doing in this department which the community should appre-

ciate. They are taking, I will venture to say, lifting, glass-painting from the old ecclesiastical groove in which it has run for so many centuries. Instead of those grotesque anachronisms which have covered the cathedral and church windows for so many ages—instead of apostles, saints, martyrs, and mitred bishops standing on the tips of perpendicular soles, apparently with the rim of a copper basin around their heads, and in robes which would have astonished Peter or Paul, the Chances are giving us forms and scenes that belong to actual human life and history; making men show their manhood to the fulness of truth, being, and act. In thus *secularizing* the art, as some may call it, they have elevated it to a higher standard for sacred and religious portraiture; and I am confident that this effect will be discernable in many of the future painted windows which will supersede those now centuries old in English cathedrals and churches.

The Light-house department of the works will fill the visiter with wonder. For the manufacture of these great sea-lanterns is one of the specialities of the establishment which, perhaps more than any other, distinguishes it from works of the like character in this and other countries. Here you see all the working sciences and mechanical forces co-operating in busy harmony in producing these beacon and guide lights for benighted ships. Not

one in a hundred men well-read in other sciences can conceive what subtle and delicate principles, laws, and combinations are brought to bear in perfecting the lenses and prisms and in adjusting the focus of each so as to produce the aggregate and required result of the whole. Here you see these beautiful structures at every stage of their building. Many of them are complete, ready for being mounted upon their sea-beaten pedestals on "a wild and rock-bound coast." An oriental or ancient fancy might take them to be the crystal crowns of huge giants stalking over the earth with their heads in the clouds. In seeing so many fully or nearly completed, it was pleasant to think that they were not to supersede but to supplement those now shedding out their lustre upon the sea; that these grand lanterns were not only to be hung up on the rocky capes and cliffs of foreign coasts never before lighted, but to be added to the number now surrounding these home islands, to be a tiara of stars shining like the light of great hopes to the tempest-tost sailors in the blackest night. Some of these lanterns are thirty feet high and twelve in diameter, and will throw the glow and glare of their light full thirty miles out upon the sea. The cost of one of the first order is about £2,000; that shown in the Great Exhibition of 1862 was marked £3,000.

The Chances are as celebrated for the produc-

tion of optical glass as for light-house lenses. In the exhibitions of 1851 and 1855 they exhibited discs of twenty-nine inches in diameter, the largest ever produced at that time. Both were purchased by the French Government for £1,000 each. There are from 1,500 to 2,000 hands employed in these works, representing such a combination of science, genius, skilled and varied industry as perhaps no other establishment in the world can present. For, although they are called Glass Works, when you enter the light-house department, you have iron-works on a great scale in minute ramification. In the buildings in which a common-sized lumber-yard of boards is made up into boxes for the exportation of glass to America or other foreign countries, you have wood-works of equal extent. Thus artisans of most mechanical crafts are employed in the different departments—workers in glass, brass, iron, and wood, and artists who would paint landscapes and portraits on canvas as well as glass of a high order of genius.

A working force of 1,700 men, women, and children, employed in one establishment, represents the population of a considerable town. The provision made for the religious and intellectual education of this army of employés is thoughtful, generous, and admirable, and worthy of all imitation. One of the edifices of these twenty-four acres of buildings is the school-house, in which

about 500 children are taught the solid, useful branches of English education. I was struck with a large printed bill put up in the very gateway of the works, setting forth the views and wishes of the proprietors in regard to this important question, which is now exciting so much interest in England. On reading it, I begged a copy, which will make the most useful page in this volume to large manufacturers who may read it. There is also a library of 2,000 volumes for the people of the works and their families, and an experienced surgeon is employed to look after their physical well-being. The following is the announcement of the Messrs. Chance to their employés:

"Glass Works, November, 1867.

"An examination of the boys, girls, and young persons employed in the various departments of our glass works, shows that many of them, of both sexes, do not possess that knowledge of the rudiments of education which every person, at least, in this neighbourhood, who is old enough to work, ought, by this time, to have acquired.

"We have therefore resolved, in future, (1) to discountenance the employment of boys and girls in our works who do not possess at the time of seeking employment a fair acquaintance with the elements of reading, writing, and arithmetic, with the addition of freehand drawing for the ornamental department; and (2) to open an additional day school for glass-house boys, and an additional evening school for girls and young women.

"In the case of glass-house boys who have at their disposal a great deal of leisure time, we expect all of them, under eighteen years of age, to attend the day school at least three times each week for the present, and in the case of all other young persons,

of both sexes, whose elementary education is defective, we expect the boys to attend the evening school three times in each week, for at least six months in the year; and girls and women for such longer period as may appear to us to be desirable.

"It is our purpose to impose a fine of sixpence per week upon glass-house boys who absent themselves from school without sufficient cause, and not longer to employ any whose conduct is reported by the master to be bad, or whose attendance is not kept up with regularity.

"We propose to hold an examination of all our young people from time to time, and to institute a system of rewards for those whose attendance, good conduct, and progress merit such distinction.

"We shall be glad to find our intentions in this matter fully appreciated by those whose welfare is to be thereby affected, and to know that those whose education is in a satisfactory condition will still give a regular attendance on the schools and classes, both for the sake of their own progress, and as an example to those whose education is not in so satisfactory a state.

"CHANCE BROTHERS & Co."

# CHAPTER XII.

ENVILLE GARDENS: THEIR RELATION AND VALUE TO THE BLACK COUNTRY—WOLVERHAMPTON: ITS HISTORICAL MONUMENTS AND ASSOCIATIONS AND ITS LEADING MANUFACTURES.

IN carrying out the programme of this volume —first, a dip into the Black Country, then one into its Green Border-Land—I commence this chapter with a few notes on a visit to the Enville Gardens, the seat of Lord Stamford, near Stourbridge. On a beautiful afternoon of the last of November, Capern accepted the challenge, and, having measured walking-sticks, we set out to see a segment of the border-land between Stourbridge and Wolverhampton in order to complete the western semicircle of the Black Country. It was one of the shortest days of the year, and at two o'clock the sun had nearly finished the small arc it was describing a little way above the southern horizon; but it was shining its best and loveliest. We only stopped for a hasty lunch at Stourbridge, and staffed on vigorously to Enville Gardens, hoping to see them before the dark set in.

While passing through the town a trifling incident illustrated the value and power of photography as a detective agency. Really the sun sets, if not the mark of Cain, at least such a mark of individuality and identification on one as a rogue could no more escape than his shadow. It was the first time that I was ever in the town, and I was in such travelling gear as I had never faced a camera in. Still, I was recognized and spoken to by a person on the side-walk who had seen some photograph of my face somewhere. Let no one fancy that it was a fellow-feeling that made me think of rogues and the difficulties of their pursuit of freedom from arrest, with their faces chasing them up and down the world in such a fashion. It might be an interesting exercise to those given to such economics, to compute how many "special constables" the sun has added to the constabulary forces of Christendom through photography.

The road was a good specimen of an English turnpike, the like of which not ten consecutive miles can yet be found in the United States. The country was rolling and wooded picturesquely, making a new and delightful scenery, varying in surface and aspect at every turning. We passed Stourton Castle, the residence of W. O. Foster, Esq., a gentleman who ought to inherit the Iron Crown and wear it on state occasions. He is one of the largest ironmasters in the world, employing

about 5,000 men. His uncle, whose fortune he inherits, made it by his own talent and industry, beginning with £500, and ending his life with about £3,000,000. In one year the census-taker found the number of men employed by this Black Prince of the Mines to be 14,000, an army which few German princes could bring into the field. The present crown prince, inheriting such a vast fortune, is increasing it by investing in estates which already have made him a peer in property with the wealthiest noblemen of the country. I am inclined to think that he recently made the largest purchase that has been effected in one private transaction in England for the last fifty years. He bought the Whitmore estate on the Severn, paying £750,000 for it, or about 3,750,000 dollars in American gold. He is now adding to the buildings and expending, in fitting them up for his occupation, a sum which will make, with the purchase money, a total of £1,000,000. And this vast sum does not abstract anything from the capital necessary to carry on his great iron and coal works. It looks well to see men win their way to a peerage by the hammer as well as by the sword. Just before coming to Stourton Castle, we passed one of those old farm-houses of a better sort which you will find here and there in England, and which once constituted the mansions of what might be called the middle-class

gentry. It looked like a small quadrangular village of buildings, of which the mansion part constituted the two-story frontage. On coming up abreast of this front, we found it was an inn, and certainly it was capacious enough to accommodate a full company of cavalry, horses and all. It mounted for the insignia of its hospitalities "The Stewponey and Foley Arms;" a sign which might look very appetising to an amateur of the new dietary proposed in Paris, but which, let us hope, will never supersede "the roast beef of Old England" either in supper or song.

We overtook, half-way up a long hill, one of the great farm wagons of this country, loaded heavily with clay and drawn by three splendid gray horses, each with a hoof that would not go into a peck measure. The whole turn-out looked as if it belonged to a first-class farmer; wagon, horses, and harnesses were of the highest order of perfection. But I was peculiarly struck with that strange economy of forces which distinguishes English farmers, by such marked contrasts, from those of America. Of course it is natural, and perhaps inevitable, that the farmers of all countries should be the most conservative as to traditional habits; that they should cling with the most tenacious adhesion to systems for which they can give no better and no other reason than that their fathers and ancestors did the same before them.

Although English farmers are so stoutly conservative in this respect, they show the greatest leaning toward the masses; and they seemingly endeavour to make the masses as solid and as heavy as possible. They have the best roads and the heaviest wagons in the world. You may frequently see in New England a two-story frame house drawn up and down hills on four wheels, not a whit more heavy and solid than those of the average one-horse carts of the English farmer. As for one of the great four-wheeled wagons used here, thilled instead of poled, an American farmer would hardly think of dragging it up a hill empty with a single horse. But it is not so much in the solidity and weight of their carts and wagons that this peculiar economy of tractor forces, inherited and perpetuated here, may be seen most strikingly illustrated. It is in their application to the masses to be moved. Here before us was an example of the system. I asked the driver to let his three magnificent gray horses straighten their trace chains. I then paced the distance from the collar of the leader to the forward axle of the wagon, and found it a little over *two rods!* Nearly half the length of one horse was lost in the connexion between them. Indeed, as nearly as I could measure it with my walking-stick, it was full six feet between a perpendicular line from the hip of one horse to the

collar ring of the one behind him to which he was attached. And still the owner of that noble team must have been a farmer of the first class—doubtless a man of general intelligence, but who had not yet learned to give a reason to himself or others for this strange use of horse-power. You seldom ever see farm-horses used in England in any other way. Whether on plough, cart, or wagon they are nearly always strung together in "Indian file," with spaces from four to six feet between each couple. I do not now recollect ever having seen a four-wheeled farm-wagon in England with a pole to it. However long and large, it is fitted with a pair of shafts, into which the thill-horse is put. Then frequently, perhaps, even if not generally, you will see the traces of the forward horse hooked into the hame ring of the one behind instead of into his drawing chain. This makes another waste, for a great deal of drawing force is lost in the uneven sway and movement of the hindermost horse, and a considerable portion of his weight has to be added to the loaded cart, to make it more *solid* and heavy. It would be almost amusing to an American teamster to watch the manure-wagons climbing over the hills from Birmingham. He would sometimes see a long procession of horses mounting the crown of the eminence seemingly detached from any load. On looking again he

would see a huge long wagon looming up so far behind the leader that one would hardly fancy there was any connexion between the two. Sometimes this economy is varied in a unique way. The stoutest horse is put into the shafts, and two spans are attached to him, with not only the long, wasting space between him and them and between each other longitudinally, but laterally; so that if the two horses thus spanned walk evenly abreast, they frequently walk four feet apart, or nearly enough asunder to admit a passing phaeton between them. In travelling through different parts of England I have noticed with much attention as well as curiosity this remarkable characteristic—this hereditary and voluntary service and adhesion to *solidity*. And I think any careful observer will come to the conclusion which I have formed, that the farmers of England waste full one-third of their horse-power; or one-sixth in the superfluous weight of their wagons, carts, and ploughs, and one-sixth in its application to them or to the load to be drawn. Often while watching one of these long, straggling string of horses drawing a wagon up a hill, with the leader full three rods from the forward axle, I have wished that the owner were obliged to take a few rudimental lessons in dynamics, that he might learn to be more merciful to his beasts. I hope it was not wrong to wish him

such an exercise for example as this: to undertake to draw a fifty-six pound weight up a hill at the end of a string forty feet long. Having tried this little experiment in tractorial forces two or three times, he would be quite likely to hitch his horses nearer to the load thereafter. Apparently no modern improvements have impaired this homage and tribute to solidity. I doubt if the road-wagons of English farmers of to-day weigh a single pound less than they did before Macadam was born, or when the highways of the country were made of its own clay or sand.

But not only horseflesh is so burdened and wasted by this "terrible tractoration," but human bone, blood, and muscle are fearfully sacrificed to this the most exacting of *Penates Anglicani.* From the cradle to the grave the English agricultural labourer bears the heavy burden of this homage. Should this book go to another edition, I intend it shall present, among its illustrations, not only English and American wagons, carts, ploughs, scythes, rakes, and axes, but also the farm-labourers' shoes of the two countries, in comparison. Those worn by the majority of the agricultural labourers here are veritable clogs to locomotion, in weight half leather and half iron. Indeed the latter must often preponderate. When on my walk from London to Land's End,

I stepped into a blacksmith's shop to see the smith shoe a donkey. Near the anvil was a pair of leather shoes brought in to be shod. The number and size of the nails driven into the soles and heels were perfectly wonderful. I am sure they would weigh as much as the four iron shoes the smith was nailing to the donkey's hoofs. The effect of wearing such heavy shoes from youth up is as perceptible in the labourer's gait as the wearing of heavy iron armour must have been in the walk and carriage of the knights of old. In the first place, there is no spring or elasticity to a pair of shoes thus bottomed with iron. They do not shed mud by the motion of the foot. Then, being so thick and broad soled, they inevitably *interfere* with each other if lifted perpendicularly. So the wearer at every step describes the segment of a circle with his foot. This motion brings his knees together, like the joints of a pair of compasses. And the habit becomes a second nature to him, and he wears it all his life long. You will not see one English farm-labourer in ten lift his foot and set it down perpendicularly, or in a direct line with his knee. So you may always recognize him, though walking many rods before you, by this peculiar swinging gait. Adding to such shoes the heavy agricultural implements he wields, he has to run the race of labour with our American farming-men so heavily-weighted

that it is a wonder he can accomplish as much as he does.

After a short talk with the driver of these splendid grays, in which he looked surprised at certain questions I put to him, we resumed our walk to Enville. The road passed for a considerable distance under the shadow of a kind of primeval forest of lofty Scotch firs, which spread a thick roofage, supported by their trunk columns full sixty feet in height. Like the eternal song of the shell, the ceaseless murmur of their solemn music fills these fir temples of Nature day and night, summer and winter. The sun had poured out its parting flood upon the wooded hills, and the evening twilight had set in, before we reached the Earl of Stamford's seat, so we were obliged to postpone our visit to the gardens till the next day. We found very comfortable quarters at the only inn of the village, and, what made them all the more enjoyable, a very intelligent and affable landlord, who could not only answer all the questions we put to him but also volunteer interesting information without asking. He had resided there for more than thirty years, and could tell us of changes in the habits of the people of the village and neighbourhood which will be referred to hereafter.

The next morning we found the beautiful weather of the preceding day had changed, and it was now

raining and chill, with a strong wind. Our landlord, however, fitted us out with waterproofs and umbrellas, and we sallied forth to see from under them the beauty and glory of the Enville Gardens rather veiled in mist. The gardener-in-chief took us over them with the greatest cordiality, and passed by no part of them without notice, though the wind reefed our umbrellas in spite of us several times while facing the beating rain. The grounds far exceeded our conception for extent and artistic embellishment, though we had heard glowing accounts of them. They must surprise even a visiter who has seen many of the ornamental parks of English noblemen. It is comparatively cheap and easy to plant and group trees of various foliage over a square mile of variegated surface, grazed by sheep and cattle. But to make acres of exquisite lawn, brooched with a thousand flower-beds and belted with choicest shrubbery, is a work of greater taste, genius, and expense. It is this peculiar feature that distinguishes Lord Stamford's grounds from any I have yet seen, and which makes them surpass even Lady Rolle's at Bicton. His flower gardens contain *seventy-three acres*, laid out in the most picturesque manner, with little lakes, fountains, and bouquets of trees, well supplied with rustic seats. All the flowers of all the zones are here in their glory, worked into the embroidery of miles of walks, skirted by walls of rhododendrons

all aglow in May with their gossamer blossoms. Four hundred thousand pots of geraniums supply only one of the contingents of beauty which the floral world contributes, under subsidy, to this little earthly elysium. All were now gone except the evergreen borders, but acres of undulating lawn were dotted or globed with flower-beds leafless and bare, looking like mammalia of Nature, which had nursed each its floral offspring to the full beauty of its sweet-breathing bloom. The grand trees, standing singly or in groups, seemed to cling with loving attachment to the soft, green surface beneath which mirrored their out-spreading glory; for while their heads towered up into the sky with proud aspiration, all their arms drooped towards the earth, as if essaying to lift it upward to show it to the sun. This was a remarkable characteristic of them all, and I never saw the like before. They all clung to the green sward in this way—not only the purple beeches, limes, and elms, but the stout and gnarly oak, which seldom yields to the influences that affect other trees of more supple nerve and muscle. Here it also droops its brawny arms, and its great strong hands feel the face of the lawn for many yards round, as a giant father would feel the face of his sleeping infant. Had a discussion with Capern on this matter in which we reversed positions. He argued as a practical man and I as a poet, a novel change

of parts. He maintained that all these various trees followed the proclivity of the mining rod, by which people used to detect the existence of minerals under the surface of the earth; that as the hazel wand tips downward in the open palm of the holder to indicate where minerals lie concealed, so the branches of all these great trees point downwards to show that metals are stored away for man far below the surface of the ground they shade. I stuck to the doctrine of "passional affinities," and urged that such high-bred trees never would have tended their aristocratic hands to common ploughed fields in that way, even if a thousand acres of coal or iron ore lay beneath the red furrows.

Although we missed the most brilliant and gorgeous half of the glory and beauty of this little garden world, or the flower show, the other half was more admirable still for the season. We saw what Nature can be assisted and taught to do in the chills, frosts, and fogs of an English November. After visiting the conservatory, which is a crystal palace of most symmetrical proportions, in the arabesque or mosque style, we passed through a half a mile of hot or forcing houses, where all the climates, seasons, soils, fruits, and vegetables of the earth's various latitudes are produced. Here, on the last day of November, were new potatoes growing, already nearly as large as hens' eggs, to

be dug for the table at Christmas. Another house was filled or festooned with cucumbers, trained up like grape-vines, and hanging their long green pendants with a relishing savour which would have delighted Sarah Gamp to ecstasy. Strawberries in blossom had a house to themselves. French beans were in pod, and peas in blow for New Year's Day. About two hundred pine-apple plants were in fruit at different stages, larger and better in flavour than those which Nature produces by herself in the West Indies. In the grape-walks we saw one set of vines which averaged a growth of twenty feet from the last of October, or within the space of five weeks. The head gardener has a force of about thirty-five men and boys in constant employment, whose aggregate wages amount to about £100 a month. We learned that the whole establishment, including house and conservatories, consume yearly £2,000 worth of coal. The kitchen-garden contains about thirteen acres. The park embracing or surrounding these gardens is of vast extent and grandly wooded. One old oak looks just like old England in its trunk and branches and in all the stoutness of its huge vitality. So until it falls or is sawn in sunder, one cannot read the record of its centuries, but it probably was a thrifty little tree before the Norman Conquest.

This little sequestered world of beauty takes a

new charm from one felicitous feature it presents to the outside world. Through all the weeks and months of its glory, it is thrown open to the public. On Tuesdays and Fridays through the season all the sooty-faced, hard-handed, and heavy-shod men of the mine, forge, and furnace in all the Black Country, may come and luxuriate in these flower gardens without a farthing's charge for admission. Here they may ramble through the flowery mazes, and drink in their life and beauty, as free as air. Nor is this all. The great fountains are played for their entertainment on both these days; thus giving them the treat which the fountains of Versailles reserve for crowned guests. When they have sated their eyes with all this gorgeous show, and walked up and down the winding aisles of the great gallery of Nature's flower paintings, they are allowed to go up into the higher grounds of the park just beyond the green walls of the garden, and there, overlooking all its beauty, have their pic nic spread, and dance and frolic, without any restriction upon their hilarious freedom. The gardener told us something to their credit, corroborating a fact which has come to be widely noticed of late, that the roughest working men may be trusted with the closest view of costly treasures of art and nature, and that they are as unlikely to abuse that confidence as the classes that claim to be more highly cultivated in dispositions and

manners. He said their sense of honour was very keen, and that he could always trust them among the choicest flowers; that they never overstepped a border that was restricted, and needed no watching. If one of their number forgot the confidence reposed in them and took a single step on forbidden ground, he was arrested and reproved in a moment by his companions. His greatest trouble was with the middle-class people, or those who assumed a superiority over the humble visiters and made less scruple in gratifying their curiosity. Such persons had to be watched with much care to keep them from trespassing on objects which men of the mine and furnace would not think of touching.

Thus these extensive and beautiful grounds, with all the artistic and expensive culture bestowed upon them, are really consecrated to the enjoyment and elevation of the masses of the people, of which none take more advantage than the working men of the district. This is an act of generosity on the part of the noble proprietor worthy of the highest appreciation and respect; and it is to be hoped that he himself will esteem the honour he wins by it above any laurels to be obtained in the hazardous competitions of the turf, in which he has risked so much for a precarious and sterile reputation. In opening such a great, green gallery of exquisite artistry to the masses of the people

without money and without price, he has instituted a noble race, in which he leads the runners for a prize well worthy the highest nobility of England.

In addition to these general and gratuitous admission days, fêtes have been produced in these gardens on a scale equal to those of Versailles. On one occasion 250,000 variegated lamps illuminated the walks, shrubbery, flowers, and plants. About 60,000 persons were present, who came from parts as distant as London, Leeds, and Liverpool. The conservatory showed every line, curve, and cornice of its structure, and appeared a vast prism which coloured the branches of the oaks and elms. The fireworks were of infinite variety, but the water view of the lakes was the masterpiece of the scenery. A three-masted frigate and a gunboat had a kind of naval action and poured into each other shot and shell of coloured fire. A pigeon of living flame flew backward and forward over the scene, and every device of pyrotechnic genius was called into requisition to make a fascinating spectacle.

The Enville Gardens are as full an illustration of the artistic culture and grouping of flowers as can be found in England. But side by side with the development of all this culture and floral susceptibilities has progressed, *pari passu*, the cultivation of the human community of the village and neighbourhood. The results produced in this

culture of their mind and manners have been more radical than any obtained in the training of flowers or plants. Indeed the improvements effected have been more like transformations than developments. Our landlord, who had been indefatigable in producing these changes for the better, described to us the means employed. He said that thirty years ago a shocking state of things existed in the village. Enville, from time immemorial, had been celebrated for its cherries; and a cherry fair had been held in the village always on Sunday during the season. Great multitudes came to it, not only from towns adjoining but all through the Black Country. To obtain a supply of cherries was only a side and secondary motive; the real one being a boisterous, roistering, ring-fighting and cock-fighting holiday, with the usual amount of drunkenness and demoralization. He had known thirty regular prize-ring fights on a single Sunday, generally extemporized on the spot and spur of the moment. This demoralizing fair had become one of the fixed institutions of the district, a vested interest of the mass in old British furious fun. To break up this institution root and branch unconditionally, would have doubtless produced a riot. No civil or religious authorities attempted this; but the better-minded people of the village effected a partial transformation of the holiday and its sports by a substitute which the fair-frequenters

accepted with good humour. They got up a new set of sports, as funny as possible, but all capable of being carried on in good-nature. These they provided for Monday instead of Sunday. Our landlord described some of the games or frolics which he invented or introduced. Indeed he seems to have been master of the ceremonies. One of these was a kind of social tar-and-feathering. A lot of fellows would stand up in a cart or wagon and daub each other with treacle instead of tar, then shake on a coat of feathers, until they looked like great owls but not so sober and human. Another sport was equally odd and unique, especially for full-grown men who had children at home. It was the jumping in sacks. A number of men would get each into a large wheat bag, with his head sticking out of the mouth gathered up around his neck ready for the race. When the signal was given, the platoon of bags would begin their frog-like jumps towards the goal, jostling each other on the way; some falling like sacks of bran, tripping up others, and making the crowd of spectators split their sides with laughter at their grotesque antics. A third entertainment was climbing a greased pole for a leg of mutton or a flitch of bacon. It was a poor chance for the first climbers after the prize, for they had to contend with the fresh grease in their ascent; but after several had made the trial the pole became

less slippery. To help the desiccating process, some of the later climbers would contrive to carry some dry sand in their vest pockets and to scatter it in their upward trail. Nor were these sports and games confined to the male section of the multitude. Several of equal fun and ingenuity were provided for the fair sex both old and young. One of these was the oddest conceit I ever heard of, and I think our landlord must have originated it. This was a competition in which several old ladies contended with each other for the prize of a pound of tea by showing which of them could first eat a basin of soup *with an awl!*

Thus for a brawling, fighting, and drinking Sunday was substituted a Monday holiday with its roistering but not malevolent or mischievous fun. This change produced a very perceptible improvement in the morals and habits of the common people of the village and vicinity. At the time of our visit another transformation was at its first stage of operation upon them. Lady Stamford a few years ago erected very elegant and capacious school buildings, at the expense of over £2,000, for the education of the children of the village, and ever since has taken a lively interest in the institution. That most popular and useful entertainment, the Penny Readings, had been recently introduced, and so well attended at these school-rooms that on the last occasion the Earl

and his Countess had been able to get in only with considerable difficulty. So he had invited the villagers to have their next Penny Reading in an apartment of his mansion. Nor was this all; the manuscript programme was just that moment brought into the inn, by which we saw that the Earl was down on it for the first reading, to be followed by Sir Thomas Moncrieffe, and a harp solo from a lady of the *chateau*. The clergyman, schoolmaster, and several other gentlemen of the village were to contribute readings and songs to the entertainment, and our landlord's daughter was coming all the way from Manchester to sing for them. I learnt afterwards that about 450 persons were present, and that they had a delightful evening.

In addition to these intellectual entertainments, soup and other food are distributed daily at the hall to the sick and poor. Putting all these things together and taking an aggregate aspect of Lord Stamford's establishment and its manifold and generous hospitalities, he may be congratulated on a course of beneficence to the community around him, not only in the highest degree creditable to him, but worthy of imitation by all the nobility and gentry of England. We noticed these features of his disposition and character with much interest, and felt highly pleased with our visit to Enville Gardens, and with the proof we

saw of their moral and social relation to the masses of the people. The contrast between the multitudes that now visit them in their season and the boisterous, brutalized squads that used to flock to the Sunday cherry fairs to drink, fight, and carouse; the difference between the Penny Readings in Lord Stamford's temporary ball-room, and the improved diversions which our landlord invented as a substitute for coarser sports, were very impressive, and we dwelt upon them with great satisfaction. Truly few flowering plants in those gardens had been more radically changed by culture than have been the habits of the common people who have walked those perfumed aisles and breathed in their softening influence since they were first opened so generously to the public.

After dinner we took leave of our hospitable and intelligent landlord, and resumed our way to Wolverhampton. The weather was inauspicious for seeing the country, which under the sun of the preceding day must have shown well to the traveller. We passed Himley Park, the family seat of the Ward family, and where the dowager Lady Ward now resides. The first *Humble*, founder of the family, was buried here. It is a great estate of remarkably variegated surface; indeed the park wall on the turnpike road seemed long enough to make one of the sides of

a common-sized township. Understanding that access to the hall and park was barred by rather rigid restrictions, we did not diverge to get a better view of them than the road could command. When we reached Wolverhampton, the town was brimful of the music of the old church bells, which were playing their gladdest chimes in honour of the first anniversary of the Queen's visit at the inauguration or unveiling of Prince Albert's equestrian statue. The grand, massive tower, that had vibrated to Sunday chimes for six hundred years, was now thrilled through all its thick walls with the silvery retintabulation of as many bells as would supply all the steeples of a large American town with one apiece.

Wolverhampton was a goodly and important town when Staffordshire was as green as any other county in England. It has a good Saxon name and history. Some of the antiquarians, with Druidical predilection, have tried to discover a British origin for its earliest name. One says it was first called "Hautune," which he thinks came from Huan, a deity of the ancient Britons. But if this were ever its name, it was doubtless a word of Danish or Saxon origin, like Hawton or Hoiton, meaning, high-town. This would designate its location. It stands on high ground, commanding a good view of the surrounding country. But a pious Saxon lady gave to the

town the name it has borne for eight centuries. Wulfruna, sister to King Ethelred, founded the College and Church of St. Mary here. The town was afterwards called Wulfrun's Hampton in honour of her pious wish and deed; but was soon shortened into Wolverhampton. The church is one of the most ancient and venerable to be found in England, and bids fair to stand as long as it has already stood, if the earth endure for so many centuries to come. It is just emerging from a recent renovation, in which all the characteristics of the old structure have been faithfully preserved and reproduced. It is the great centre-piece of the town; and though the rain and wind were raking the streets, we hunted up the key-holder, who let us into the building. The dim, religious light and the silent presence of nearly a thousand years blended well in the impression with which we walked up and down the solemn aisles. Most of the painted windows, however, are recent productions and of modern genius. Our recent visit to Boscobel, and the fresh impression of Charles's adventures there and at Moseley and Bentley, gave us special interest in the Lane Chapel, and we went to that first on entering the church. It contains monuments of the family for several generations, at least two before the celebrated John Lane. On an altar tomb lie the full length forms in marble of Thomas

Lane and his lady, who died in 1582, or thirty-seven years before Colonel John, the hero of Charles II, was born. So he was probably their grandson. His monument is a very elaborate piece of sculpture; indeed, I do not remember one in which so many devices and symbols are grouped and wrought with such minuteness. The various parts of body armour, and all the tools known to war, ancient and modern, are done to life in the marble. Then Charles's Oak at Boscobel, with a trooper's horse at full gallop under the leafy branches, are well carved. Indeed, a number of passages in his experience in this vicinity are carved in the monument, so that both by illustration and written narrative, a record of that uncrowned and recrowned sovereign is here graven in characters more lasting than the memory of his dubious virtues; even if he had any worth remembering in the present day. The tall, broad tablet, headed and bordered by all these symbols of Mars and martial history, bears a long inscription in Latin, which is an eloquent tribute to his worth, and a very expressive production withal. I do not know if a translation of it into English has ever been published, so I subjoin the following, which is rather literal, with the exception of the word *exuviæ*, which contains a meaning that would be too inelegant, even for so grave a subject, if given in full; for it would

suggest more especially that process of shuffling off a mortal coil by which snakes shed their skins and chickens their shells:

"THE MORTAL REMAINS OF THE
PRE-EXCELLENT JOHN LANE, ESQ.,
EXPECTING TO BE HAPPILY REANIMATED,
HERE ARE DEPOSITED.
A MAN ABOVE TITLES, OR TO WHOSE MERITS
TITLES ARE WANTING,
IN THE RECENT INTESTINE TROUBLES UNDER KING CHARLES I,
AND AFTERWARDS IN THE WAR IN HOLLAND UNDER KING
CHARLES II,
HE MOST WORTHILY DISCHARGED THE OFFICE OF MILITARY
COMMANDER.
HE WAS THE LIBERATOR OF KING AND COUNTRY,
FOR WHEN CHARLES II FROM THE BATTLE OF WORCESTER
WAS FLEEING FAINT AND PURSUED ON EVERY SIDE,
WITH GREATEST PIETY, GREATEST FAITH, GREATEST BRAVERY,
THEREFORE TO THE EXTREME PERIL OF HIS HEAD,
FROM THE WICKED WILES OF THE USURPING TYRANT AND HIS
FOLLOWERS
STOUTLY RESCUED HIM!
A DEED AMONG ILLUSTRIOUS
THE MOST ILLUSTRIOUS,
AS THE MONARCH ALSO HIMSELF DID NOT TACITLY ACKNOWLEDGE.
WITH REGAL AUGMENTATION FROM THE ROYAL INSIGNIA
TO THE ANCIENT ARMS OF THE NOBLE LANE FAMILY,
THE SON, THOMAS LANE, ESQ., WORTHY HEIR OF A WORTHY
FATHER,
HE DECORATED AND REWARDED
IN PLACE OF THE DECEASED,
WHOSE BONES THE ABOVE GRATEFUL AND PIOUS KING
IN THE BASILICK MAUSOLEUMS OF WESTMINSTER
OUT OF HIS LOVE WISHED TO BE MAGNIFICENTLY ENTOMBED,
HAD NOT THE DYING HERO HIMSELF TO THESE HONOURS
MODESTLY OBJECTED.
HE WAS BORN THE VIII OF APRIL, 1619,
AND DECEASED THE FIRST OF SEPTEMBER, 1667,
A DEATH DEEPLY LAMENTED."

This *resumè* of the life and worth of Colonel John Lane, taken from his monument, is as brief a notice of him as one could well write. His unwavering fidelity to a king and a cause which the great majority of the English people so disliked does not dim the lustre of that loyalty of heart which even the political enemies of a man cannot help admiring. Charles, on his restoration to the throne, remembered gratefully, as well he might, the devotion of this faithful servant of his crown; and the House of Commons voted £1,000 per annum, and another £500 in 1660. Although called *Mrs.*, she must have been Jane Lane, the colonel's sister, who took up Charles II on her saddle before her, on that famous ride to Bristol. It is a pity that Richard Penderel, the hero of the Boscobel drama, was not also buried in Wolverhampton church or honoured with a monument near the Lanes. We found that he was interred in St. Giles-in-the-Fields, London, where his true-hearted faithfulness to his outlawed and distressed sovereign is recorded in rhymes of wretched brag and bathos, unworthy of the sublime simplicity of his virtues. When next in London I intend to visit the grave of that valiant yeoman, whom Cromwell himself might have admired for his unbribable and invincible constancy. The other host and hider of Charles in his thickest perils, or Thomas Whitgreave, of

Moseley Hall, was buried in the parish church of Bushbury. The inscription on his monument is written in vigorous Latin, and the heated feeling of that stirring time seems still warm in the marble words. Here are most of them:

"STOP, TRAVELLER, TO REVERE THE FAITHFUL ASHES HEREIN.
HE WHO LIES HERE WAS A SERVANT WORTHY OF CÆSAR.
IT IS NOT A GREAT THING TO SERVE THE GREAT WHEN THE SKY IS SERENE;
HE WAS A SERVANT WHEN THE TIMES WERE CLOUDY;
HIS GUEST WAS THE KING WHEN VANQUISHED, DEFENCELESS, POOR,
COMPLETELY DISGUISED AND UNLIKE HIMSELF;
WHILE, THUNDERING IN ARMS, BREATHING FIRE AND FLAMES,
A BLOODY TROOP WAS SEEKING THE KING,
ANON POURING FORTH BRIGHT GOLD WITH THEIR CRIES,
ADDING LARGE BRIBES TO THEIR THREATS.
BUT XX DID NOT SEDUCE NOR PERIL APPAL HIM;
FOR FAITHFUL LOVE WAXED STRONGER IN HIS NOBLE BREAST,
THE FAITHFUL LOVE OF KING AND THE BRITISH REALM.
SO IF THOU ART WISE LEARN FIDELITY FROM THIS MARBLE."

Charles's host at Moseley Hall, this Thomas Whitgreave, seems to have outlived nearly all the companions and helpers of his flight and escape; for he died on the 14th of July, 1702, at the age of 84. What is the precise meaning of XX in his epitaph I have not undertaken to give in the foregoing translation. Whether XX gold sovereigns, or a Bank of England note to that amount, made the bribe usually offered by Cromwell's "bloody troop" for betraying the King, or whether the two numbers represent some other

idea current at the time, I am unable to decide. Of course the XX did not mean a familiar brand of ale, of which a barrel was offered to warp the loyalty of any of Charles's liege subjects. Indeed, it is doubtful if that ale brand were known in his day. There is another monument, the statue of a full-sized knight standing on a pedestal, which bears a full description of his virtues. It is that of Admiral Levison, who served against the Spanish under Elizabeth, and achieved feats deeply recorded in brass. If one could not read the Latin inscription, he might take the statue for that of Shakespeare. In form and face the resemblance is quite striking.

Few churches in England are more impressive in their exterior and interior aspects than St. Mary's of Wolverhampton. It does not compare with Tong Church for monumental wealth and grandeur; but its massive walls and tower, and its history, reaching back into the misty blue and romance of Saxon times, make it an object of peculiar interest. When one, especially an American, or the citizen of a young nation, visits such edifices, and walks up and down with chastened step their dim-lighted aisles, a spray of thoughts comes flashing to his mind, like the tinted beams of light that come to his feet through the stained windows. Something more than half-a-dozen centuries is looking down upon

him. The living Present that overshadows him is a great and solemn vitality, whose breath and pulse he feels all alive and stirring upon him. And, what is more, and the special thought that touches him, this breath and pulse have the glow and throb of twenty successive human generations. Through all these long ages they have breathed and beat without a break. Here is this grand old church, built and baptised by that fair-haired, blue-eyed, good-hearted Saxon woman, Wulfruna. Ever since she had her flaxen-haired baby christened in it, up to this day, the little bleating lambs of Christ's flock have been brought to this font. Ever since her day, fathers and mothers, young men and young maidens, and children of all years, have gathered within these walls for worship. The Norman Conquest, the Wars of the Roses and of the Revolution; the changes of dynasties, governments, and of religions even, have not broken up or sundered the line of this pious succession with the gap of one silent Sunday. Who can stand in such a building and, as it were, put his hand to this day's link of such an electric chain of life, and not feel a thrill coming down it all the way from the Saxon Heptarchy? Look at this town around it. Few in England wear seemingly more antiquity in general aspect. Here are houses built in Elizabeth's day. But what is Elizabeth's day compared with the date of the

oldest walls of this house of religious life and worship? Why, here assembled men and women said prayers and sang hymns together, and brought their infants to the font four hundred years before Elizabeth was born. From Wulfruna's time to Victoria's the angels that come listening to the mingled voices of human worshippers, have looked down through these mullioned windows upon a living mosaic of gray, golden, raven, and flaxen heads, bending low in prayer under these lofty and massive arches. Think of the self-renovating vitality of this sacred edifice. All its stony veins seem alive with the immortality of truth and faith. This great tower, looking so serene over the woods and vales, has seen "the cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces," built from the same quarry with itself, melt away, and whole villages of brick and stone dissolve under the breath of time. This very town it has seen reduced to dust and rebuilt many a time; and embattled castles, with walls of boastful might, broken and mingled into haggard ruin, while its own life renews itself like an immortality. These are thoughts that an attentive mind must give scope and verge to in visiting one of these old English churches of Saxon foundation and history.

Wolverhampton has been distinguished for two centuries and more for its manufactures. Locks

led the way in this distinction, and perhaps hold it still. The early smiths seem to have rivalled the most ingenious artisans of the Continent in the trade. A unique, old history of Staffordshire, printed in 1730, gives many instances of this skill. It says: "So curious are they in lock-work (indeed beyond all preference) that they can contrive a lock that shall shew, if the master or mistress send a servant into their closet with the master-key or their own, how many times that servant has gone in at any distance of time, and how many times the lock has been shot for a whole year; some of them being made to discover it 500 or 1,000 times. Further, there was a very fine lock made in this town, sold for £20, that had a set of chimes in it, that would go at any hour the owner should think fit. These locks they make in brass or iron boxes, curiously polished, and their keys finely wrought, not to be exceeded." Thus the town stood first in the kingdom at that early date in reputation for lock-making, and this it still maintains. Chubb's locks are literally household words in both hemispheres. They now produce over 30,000 annually, varying in price from 10*s.* to £3 each. And, what is rather singular, these are all made by hand, in the old process in vogue twenty years ago. There are now upwards of 100 establishments for the manufacture of locks in Wolverhampton, employing about 2,000 hands.

Japanned ware must stand second if not first in the manufactures of the town. It is produced on the largest scale, and in a surprising variety and value of articles. Although the island itself is supposed to have been called after the tin of Cornwall, imported and used by the Phœnicians, it would be difficult to ascertain how the metal was worked into articles of use or ornament. For a thousand years or more it was probably used only as britannia, or melted and cast into moulded utensils. The plating of sheet iron with it is comparatively a recent invention. It was first introduced into England in 1665 from the Continent, and constituted a considerable trade in South Wales, especially at Pontypool. About a century later Wolverhampton became the principal seat of the manufacture. It was introduced into New England about the time of the American Revolution, and became the leading business of several towns in Connecticut.

The most interesting, if not most extensive establishment for the manufacture of this white and black ware is that of Messrs. F. Walton & Co., at the Old Hall. While standing in the massive-walled, low-jointed counting-room of this grand old Elizabethan mansion, I was impressed very vividly with the movement and mutation of the industries of the town and district which it represented. Here was the central, manor mansion of

the town, erected before Elizabeth was born, and occupied by the Levison family. They were probably of Jewish descent, bearing for centuries the Hebrew name of Ben Levi, when they Saxonized it to Levison, which meant the same thing. At the time when they flourished here, they made the wool trade the great business of Wolverhampton. This was their counting-room, where they conducted their large operations. Then the district around had not begun to be a black country. Then white sheep, with fleeces unstained by smoke, fed over a green and undulating surface, now buried fathoms deep in the *debris* of mines, furnace, and forge. They grazed and basked with their white lambs, where now the tall gaunt wolves of flame lap the earth by night and day with their red tongues. So distinctive and extensive was the wool trade carried on here, that the town up to the present century was called *Wool*verhampton. I was told that in process of time, the Levison family, who owned this hall and estate, became reduced to a single representative, and that was a daughter. The accumulated property had become a fortune equal to the wealth of one of the richest peers of the realm. The trustees, therefore, thought that it ought to constitute the dowry of a peeress, and they easily found a peer's son willing to take the heiress and her fortune on that condition. She was therefore married to a Gower, but on the

stipulated condition that her name should always be put first through all generations of their posterity, and this condition is now observed in the compound name, Leveson-Gower. This is the maiden name of the Sutherland family, and in the counting-room of the Old Hall in Wolverhampton, now a tin and japan-ware manufactory, the foundation of that family's fortune was laid.

But there is another historical incident connected with this Old Hall of nearer and wider interest to the admirers of dramatic celebrities. Here, side by side with working-men still living, at the same bench, Edwin Booth, the great tragedian, laboured as a skilled artisan. One of the old men of the establishment remembers him well, and his first acting in some amateur theatricals in the town. His impetuous temper was as marked at the workmen's bench as it was in later days on the stage, as Richard or Macbeth. Tin and iron are not the only metals worked at this establishment into every conceivable article of household use and ornament. Paper is here made into a metal and wrought into shapes of wonderful variety and beauty. The trays of this material rank among works of high art. Indeed, these wares of tin-plate and *papier maché* not only employ but develop artists of first-rate genius. Here Bird, the painter of "The Village Politicians," took his first lessons in the art, by which he won such reputation.

Other artists are in training in the same school, painting on japanned tin-plate or metallized paper for their canvas. The Old Hall is the most interesting manufacturing establishment in the Black Country for its antecedents and associations, and well worth visiting for the beautiful ware it produces.

I next visited the manufactory of the Messrs. Loveridge and Co., who carry on the same trade on a still more extensive scale. They employ between 400 and 500 persons, and one would think, on looking at the prodigious stock of articles ready for the market, that they could alone supply a large and growing nation. I was told that this stock was worth at least £60,000, embracing articles used in the first stages of civilization. The stamping-rooms show the progress of machine-force in the manufacture of the larger wares. Not long ago the hand-mallet or hammer worked up these various forms with continuous din of the gold-beater's strokes. But now you see in one of these large shops two parallel rows of fall or stamp presses working by steam, on the principle of the pile-driver. Some of these falling stamps weigh a ton, and they make powerful impressions on the plate of sheet-iron, placed over the lower die, at the first stroke. The iron must be of the first quality to stand this process without breaking or straining the grain of the surface. The best has

to be annealed after three or four blows. They were trying an experiment with the Bessemer steel, with the view of getting a smoother surface for large dinner covers, some of which would give honour, scope, and margin to the largest joint of roast beef ever cut from a prize ox in England. The steel is hard to work under the stamp and requires annealing frequently, but will probably yield a surface susceptible of higher polish when tinned than the common sheet-iron. The art department of the establishment is very interesting; and I had never conceived that so much highly-trained genius was employed in the ornamentation of these household articles. I was surprised to learn that the pictures in the lids of parlour coal vases were really painted one by one on canvas and in oils. Thus the lid of the vase is the frame of an oil painting under a glass cover. Here, too, as at Messrs. Walton's, could be seen in remarkable illustration what can be made of paper. Not only trays of every style and size, with a metal ring to them, but panels for railway carriages, which, in a collision, would make no splinters. They gave me a piece of half-inch paper board; and doubtless the joists and ceiling of a house might be made out of the same material. There are about 2,000 persons employed in the manufacture of tin and japan ware in the town and immediate neighbourhood. Since 1849 these in-

dustries have doubled in extent, and bid fair to increase in the same ratio. There are fifteen iron foundries, twenty brass foundries, ten iron-plate works, fifteen steel toy manufactories, and many other mechanical businesses in the town.

Wolverhampton, if not the central, is the leading town of one of the most industrial counties in England. It stands on a commanding site, and on a good solid stratum of ancient history. Its name has a good old Saxon sound; and its main street and market place have not yet been reduced to the straight lines and cast-iron uniformity of modern architecture. It has the best equestrian statue of Prince Albert yet erected, which was wrought after the express thought of the Queen, and inaugurated by her with great *eclat* in 1866. The following year the most remarkable Church Congress ever held in England assembled in the town, with bishops from all English-speaking lands. So, taking all the aspects of its individuality and progress into view, Wolverhampton is making its mark as a vigorous and public-spirited community.

## CHAPTER XIII.

THE LICKEY HILLS—REDDITCH, AND ITS NEEDLE AND FISH-HOOK MANUFACTURES—SMETHWICK, OLDBURY, WESTBROMWICH, WEDNESBURY, TIPTON, AND WALSALL, AND THEIR INDUSTRIES—TABLE OF EXPORTS OF THE BLACK COUNTRY TO THE UNITED STATES.

IN all the Green Border-Land of the Black Country there are no hills more grateful and delightful for airing one's body and soul than the Lickey cluster, overlooking Bromsgrove. And for this peculiar reason are they such happy pic nic rendezvous, especially for men, women, and children of the mine and forge district; they are perfectly Scotch in cut and clothing. They are belted with genuine Scotch firs and larches; they are carpeted with genuine Scotch heather, which feels so elastic under your feet and gives such elasticity clear through you to every lock of your hair. The thymy incense of its purple flood of blossom you breathe in the air, and you feel as if on one of the Ochil Hills. Indeed, each of the cluster realizes to you what the Scotch poet said of that range when glowing under the

purer blaze of the setting sun; "it gleams a purple amethyst." These remarkable hills look as if transplanted here from the Highlands, all in their Highland dress; and are as Scotch in it, in the ranks of English hills to be seen drawn up over the vast levels of Oxfordshire and Worcestershire, as a regiment of Highland soldiers in kilts and tartans are among the British brigades of the line. Thus both for use and ornament they are beautiful and valuable features of the Green Border-Land of the Black Country, and thousands of all ages and conditions from the smoky district luxuriate on these heathered heights in summer. Then they are famous for purple fruits as well as flowers. They supply Birmingham and other large towns far and near with bilberries of the finest size and flavour. So, any summer day in the year when the sun shines upon them, these hills are set to the music of merry voices of boys and girls, and older children who feel young on the purple heather at fifty. Then the scenery from these tops embraces a vast sweep of fertile and beautiful country. If our poet Whittier could call the central county of Massachusetts "rich and rural Worcester," he would the same and more of its English mother, if he could see Old England's Worcestershire from one of the Lickey Hills. You see on one side of the great green valley of the Severn the

towering Malvern range, and on the other the Bredon heights, standing blue and lofty, like opposite pillars to the broad gateway of one of the most magnificent vales in England. Just between the feet of the two main Lickey Hills is nestled a snug, quiet little hotel, called "The Rose and Crown," associated in my mind to a memory which can never attach with such lively interest to any other way-side inn in England. For it was the first that I ever entered for a night's lodging. I had just arrived from America, in the leafy month of June, 1846, and that very day had commenced that foot tour which I resumed and completed in 1863-4. Good Joseph Sturge, that afternoon, had buckled on my knapsack and set me on the road at Edgbaston, and I had made a sauntering walk to this little cosy old inn, just as the setting sun was pouring its slanting cloud of glory into the green gorge. It was just the English way-side inn I had read and dreamed of from youth; just the one I was to meet in the programme of the tour sketched by fancy before leaving home. Everything around and in it was thoroughly English, to the watering-trough, the settle under the shade trees, the skittle-grounds, beer-mugs and all. And there was the landlady—I should have recognized her in New York—a regular Saxon-faced and Saxon-haired woman, buxom, bland, and radiant.

There was the round, unvarnished deal table standing kindly on three legs, and the long tobacco pipes, with reddened tips to their stems. Never did I so luxuriate in a tavern entertainment before. It was all my fancy had dreamed; and I should realize the dream to the full—I knew I should. I was to walk all around the island in that fashion; to put up at such a way-side inn at night; write until twelve next day, then buckle on my knapsack and walk about ten miles through the country villages and hamlets to another hostelry at sunset. This was my first day's experience of this programme; and it promised well. Next morning arose early, and ate breakfast on the little round table to the song of the lark that came in at the open window like a benediction on the meal. When the table was cleared, I sat down to the literary part of my programme, determined to bring it up to the cherished expectation. How quiet was everything around and above! I was put upon the honour of an enthusiastic imagination, and could not disappoint it. So I wrote for four hours with great gusto and application, and got off an article under the head of "The Last Hour of the League," for "Douglas Jerrold's Newspaper," which he had just started, and for which I had promised to write a few papers on my proposed walk up and down England. Thus I had accomplished the first day's working of my plan

satisfactorily. So, after dinner on the round table, I buckled on my knapsack, gave the ruddy-faced landlady a copy of my recipes for making bread, cakes, and puddings out of Indian corn-meal, and resumed my walk towards Worcester, perfectly delighted with this opening experience.

It was, therefore, especially interesting to me to visit this way-side inn after an interval of twenty-one years. The whole scenery of these hills had impressed itself on my mind, and two or three incidents had been associated to it, fixing the impression more vividly. A mile or two further on towards Bromsgrove I was caught in a shower, and turned into a nailer's shop by the road-side for shelter. It was not much larger than a good-sized potato-bin with a tile roof to it. Here a father and his son were busily at work. The lad was only nine years old, standing with bare feet on a stone to raise him breast-high to the anvil. His face was smutty of course, as it ought to have been, and his long black hair was coarse and unkempt. He could not read, nor could his father afford to send him to school, as he needed his earnings for the support of younger children. He was a hearty, healthy, merry-eyed boy; still, as he was the first I had seen of his age at the anvil, and not dreaming that any younger or poorer was to be found at the same work, I made a little martyr

of him in my own mind, and wrote my impressions of his condition in an article which had a wide reading in the United States. It excited so much sympathy with the youngster that, at my suggestion, the American children raised a contribution of about £30 to send him to school, and to pay his father 2*s.* 6*d.* a week in lieu of his wages. When he grew to be of age, he came to me in New England and worked a year on my farm; and is still living in my native town, the father of several happy children. This was the special incident of my second day's walk, and furnished the raw material of an article which was far more widely read than my "Last Hour of the League," which I had finished an hour before this little adventure.

As I am now on personal reminiscences connected with the Lickey and neighbourhood, I must notice Bromsgrove and its grand old church, This edifice is surpassed by few if any ecclesiastical structures in Worcestershire. It stands on ground raised by nature just high enough to make the earth-work conform to the symmetry of the building. The massive tower is a pedestal for the tall spire, in perfect harmony with its height and taper. The whole external aspect of the church, from the top of the spire to the base of the eminence, impresses one with a sense of symmetry, beauty, and grandeur. But it was the interior that made

such a deep impression upon me in 1846. The stained windows and other features were admirable; but here I saw other objects for the first time and with wonder. They were whole families of lords and ladies lying side by side on marble or stone beds as large as life. There they lay with their pale hands folded so meekly as in prayer, while the flush of tinted light from the painted windows suffused their faces, giving them a pleasant look, as if their prayers were heard hopefully. I had read of effigies but had never seen one before, and never knew what manner of men and women they were in marble. The town itself is built chiefly on one long street, and is quite a bustling place of business. It is one of the principal nail-making centres of the district, and has a respectable variety of other trades. The Free Grammar School, founded by Edward VI, is its most salient and distinguishing feature. This is one of the institutions established in the reign of that excellent prince, which may be called the Edward or Educational Age of England, just as the time of the best of the Cæsars was called the Augustan Age in Rome. He inspired the movement and gave his name to establishments which afterwards were munificently endowed by benevolent and wealthy men who followed his example. Thus, Sir Thomas Cookes supplemented the royal gift to this school with a fund sufficient to pay for

six scholarships and six fellowships in Worcester College, Oxford, a truly munificent donation.

Close to Bromsgrove are the extensive salt-works of Stoke Prior. The brine pits are the deepest in England, or more than 600 feet. The works cover the space of about seventeen acres, and cost about £450,000. The brine yields a rich proportion, or forty-two per cent., of salt. About 500 hands are employed, and about 3,000 tons of salt produced weekly. Droitwich, the next town, is a kind of Salina or Syracuse, whose very name breathes "the brine of the ocean." These Worcestershire springs or wells export about 50,000 tons, and those of Cheshire about 650,000 annually. Although so many corruptible things are seasoned and preserved wholesome by salt, it does but little in this way for the minds and morals of the men, women, and children engaged in its manufacture. The printed reports of their conduct and condition, I am inclined to believe, are exaggerated, or refer to times gone or going past. Says one of these statements: "The work is necessarily continuous day and night, and from Monday morning to Saturday evening it often happens that the labourer never quits the precincts of the works, snatching his intervals of rest beside the pans. Men and women, boys and girls, are thus exposed to more than all the debasing and demoralizing influences which haunt the worst

dwellings of our agricultural labourers, without a single antagonistic agency to prevent their lapse into the lowest depths of brutish immorality. With scarcely an exception, wherever salt manufactories on a large scale have existed, the population, employed in them has been the disgrace and pollution of the neighbourhood, a community almost unapproachable by philanthropy and irreclaimable by religion." This is truly a hard saying, and should be taken, I hope, "with a grain of salt." It may be true of many salt works, perhaps, in times past, of all of them. But this great establishment at Stoke Prior must be excepted from the rule; for the proprietor has entirely discontinued the employment of women at the works, and the change has already taken effect on the habits and social condition of the workpeople in such a manner, it is said, as to produce a social revolution in the neighbourhood.

A few miles to the eastward of Bromsgrove is Redditch, an industrious, neat, rural little town, planted in one of the greenest districts of Worcestershire. In one salient respect, it is distinguished from every other manufacturing town in England. It has virtually absorbed and monopolized the whole needle-making trade of the kingdom and of half the rest of the world and more. Other towns have each taken the lead in some manufacture, but

this has drawn one all into itself. The number of its needles sent abroad is perfectly incredible, and I wonder the manufacturers can believe the totals of their own bills. The history of the needle runs as parallel with the history of civilization as any other implement used by man or woman. It has had its wooden, bone, brass, iron, and steel age. Thorns hardened in the fire served the earliest generations doubtless, who were not very elaborate in their tailoring, and had not cultivated a fancy for fine embroidery. Fish-bones probably followed, and had their day and use; then brass and perhaps gold needles became known and used in the higher ranks of society. As most of the implements and appurtenances of civilization were brought into Europe by the Moors, they first introduced the steel needle. The first man who made it in England was doubtless a Moor, who set up the trade in London in 1545, although he was called an "Indian." The secret of the manufacture died out with him, and a considerable interval elapsed before it was revived. The Spaniards, who were indebted to the Moors for nearly all they knew, learned this art of them and taught it to the French and Germans. A German, by the name of Elias Krause, revived the manufacture in England in Elizabeth's time. The trade gradually emigrated from London to its present seat, Redditch, without any ostensible reason for this

determination. For the first half century the wire was imported from Spain and Germany; after that time the English makers began to draw their own wire. At first it was cut to the length of the intended needle, then flattened at one end, in which was punched a square eye. This square-eyed needle continued in vogue up to 1800, when the stamp press with its dies was first introduced. Successive improvements followed, bringing the art to its present perfection. But the sleepless eye of prejudice looked with hostile suspicion at many of the improvements that were to work to the benefit of the workmen themselves. For instance, in 1840, one of the Redditch manufacturers revived the practice of hardening needles in oil instead of water, by which process they came out straight instead of crooked. The crook straighteners took alarm, and something worse at this new process, which was to supersede their old occupation, and the unhappy manufacturer was mobbed and driven from the town. Another improvement, entirely designed to render one operation less detrimental to the health of those engaged in it, was opposed by them on grounds that will seem incredible to the next generation of working-men. The pointing of the needles on the grindstone was one of the most dangerous of occupations, and short were the lives of those who followed it. A fine steel dust was generated, which permeated the

lungs and brought on consumption frequently at middle age. But if the occupation was so fatal, the men earned extra wages by it, and measuring years by pounds and shillings, they seemed to estimate and prize the value of life by the amount of its earnings. So, I was told, they opposed the introduction of the Sheffield grinders' fan, which carried off the steel dust and made needle-pointing a more healthy employment, inasmuch as it did not pay for the extra risk of life it once involved. Labour could hardly be more minutely subdivided than in the production of the needle here. With all the introduction of machinery and improved methods, it still passes through *seventy* pairs of hands before it is fully ready for the market.

The lowest estimate of the production the needle trade of Redditch and adjoining villages given me by several manufacturers, will show what a business it has become. According to this estimate, 350 tons of cast steel and 450 tons of iron wire are used annually, from which *one hundred millions* of needles a week are produced for home and exportation! Every fortnight the Redditch men turn out a needle, "warranted not to cut in the eye," for every man, woman, and child on the globe. Nor has the demand been reduced by the very extensive use of the sewing machine. The quantity shipped to America, especially the

year after the Civil War, was simply prodigious; showing that the bomb, ball, and bayonet had rent and tattered the clothing of millions as well as the face and faculties of their land. At least thirty millions of needles a week must have gone to the United States through the whole of 1866.

Fish-hooks are the other manufacture of Redditch. This has followed the needle in different stages of its development, from the crooked fish-bone to the crooked pin and from that to the present implement. In size and use they almost equal in variety the needle itself. Here are hooks for all waters and for all fish that swim in sea, lake, river, and meadow brooks—for sharks, cod, salmon, herring, trout, roach, and minnow. As there are more fresh-water fisheries in America than on all the other continents, a vast number of hooks go to the States and the British provinces. Not only the bare hooks go in such quantities, but a large number all ready for use. Fishing tackle, embracing all kinds of alluring baits, such as artificial flies, frogs, minnows, &c., constitutes a manufacture of considerable extent. About 600 persons are engaged in the fish-hook trade of Redditch.

Thus Redditch has virtually monopolized the manufacture of needles and fish-hooks, and, if rightly conducted, may retain the business thus created. But I was sorry to learn, that, though deeply impressed with the value of the two trades

to the town and to themselves individually, there was no organization, nor even spontaneous unity among the manufacturers to retain and expand the business; that a keen-eyed jealousy inspired their eager competition with a suspicious, unkindly spirit and aspect. I do not know if special occupations give a shaping to men's minds, or whether the exclusive manufacture of needles and fish-hooks tends to give peculiar sharpness to competitors in the trade. If such is the case, then a Chamber of Commerce, or a Trade Guild, would be all the more necessary and valuable to Redditch, to induce the manufacturers to say *we* and *our* in regard to the great businesses of the town more heartily than they do at present. No town could value too highly such a source of income and industry; and through unorganized and hostile rivalries it may some time go to another locality. Nature has done all it could by its gracious and peaceful surroundings to make the town and its interests a united and pleasant community, and the trade could not well find a happier seat, in this respect, for its industry. As a proof of the producing capacity of the meadow and pasture lands adjoining, the fact will suffice, that one of the leading manufacturers told me that he had kept four cows, of graded Alderney, on nine acres; and that they produced forty pounds of butter a week through the season,

beside supplying his family with milk and cream. Few dairies in England can exhibit such a high average of production.

We have now radiated these walks from Birmingham in a westerly direction through the Black Country. With a winding walk through it from south to north, we will bring our notes on the district to a close.

The whole of the Black Country between Birmingham and Wolverhampton is a nebula of coal and iron towns, making one great cloud of industrial communities, interspersed with many centres of deeper density, each of which has a town or parish name, and gives it to a space of thinner shade that surrounds it. Smethwick is one of these centres of population and industry, and is the seat of several large establishments, including The London Works of the Patent Bolt and Nut Company, Patent File Company, and several other extensive manufactories. Soho, a centre of mechanical genius and enterprise which once put forth such an influence over the world under Boulton and Watt, has lost its pre-eminence since their day. Still important works are carried on in the parish, of which those established by the late George Frederick Muntz, M.P., for the manufacture of Metal Sheathing, are the most noted and extensive. Oldbury has perhaps as

great variety and extent of manufacturing establishments as any equal space in the district. Here are the celebrated Brades Works, which have already been noticed at some length. Not far from them are the Bromford Works, of the Messrs. Dawes, perhaps equally celebrated for the production of the best kind of bar iron. Indeed they may be regarded as a representative establishment for the district; and I visited them one day with peculiar interest. When in full operation, with their sixty puddling furnaces in action, they present a scene which would have stirred the muse of Homer or Virgil beyond any of their vivid fancies. Puddles! mud puddles! what rustic, Saxon similes are applied to these fierce operations! To an outsider looking into one of those sixty furnaces, and seeing, if his eyes would bear it, the boiling, bubbling mass of metal, ten times more than red hot, a puddle would sound too wet and watery to describe it. The puddlers who fish in the troubled fountain, are generally stripped to the waist, and flooded with perspiration. They fish out a mass at the end of the rod, of a weight which shows what athletes they are trained to be. I hardly know what figure to use to convey an idea of the appearance and consistency of this burning, frittering fizzy mass of metal thus brought out of the furnace. Should one dip a large sponge into

a mud-puddle, it would fill in a moment with the impure matter, which, on compression, would all flow out again, leaving the sponge as it was before the dip. There is this difference in the simile: the meshes of the sponge are in the metal puddle itself, and they all come out together with the mass. This mass, cooling a little on its way to make it more coherent, goes under a hammer, or into a squeezing machine, which, at the first blow or turn, throws out the spray of the impure puddle-matter, such as melted stone, cinder, &c. Thus the sponge part is only the genuine iron meshes or grains, which are thus squeezed and hammered and rolled into solid bars. To see these masses at white heat running down iron slide-ways from every direction to the squeezers, hammers, and rollers, is a stirring sight. Some of these hammers are of a tremendous power, especially the Nasmyth pounder. When it falls with a ton weight upon a liquid boulder, you will see a horizontal shower of meteors which would penetrate a suit of the best broadcloth at a considerable distance. There was a machine called the *squeezer* which operated to admiration in the first stages. It was a large fluted horizontal wheel which turned in a fluted semicircular case, the receiving being twice as large as the delivering hopper. A mass of the half-liquid material was thrust in on the left, and pressed into a constantly

narrowing space, until it was delivered at the right, a compact, elongated roll ready for the trip-hammer or rolling machine.

The chemical works of the Messrs. Chance, and other large establishments, are situated in Oldbury, and, embracing all these, it is a very important industrial centre in the district. West Bromwich, an adjoining town, is a place of much growth and vigour, with a goodly antiquity for a historical basis. It was a country village in the reign of Edward I, and was taxed to furnish that sovereign with the sinews of war in the Holy Land. As one of the social productions of society, it gave ladder-footing for the ascent of an old county family to the English peerage. This was the Legge family, which, by successive stages, culminated in the title of the Earl of Dartmouth. Sandwell Hall, near the town, was their seat and residence for several centuries. They have now converted it into a very useful institution, or a training college for farm and domestic servants, and a goodly and comfortable place it makes for the education of agricultural foremen or labourers, who seldom have such baronial halls for their outfitting. Colonel Legge, who fought with and for Charles II, and was wounded in the Worcester battle, was one of the family, and escaped the gallows only through the devotion and ingenuity of his wife, who exchanged dresses

with him in Coventry gaol; a romantic feat not yet, I believe, set to poetry.

West Bromwich has grown in the last half century with the rapidity of an Illinois village. In 1811, its population numbered about 7,500; it now probably exceeds 50,000, and is to have a member of Parliament under the new Act. A great variety of manufactures are carried on here, of which box-irons, stoves, grates, coffee-mills, and iron bedsteads are the most noted and extensive.

A few miles further in the same direction you come to Wednesbury, which looks in print like the middle of the week, but is commonly pronounced "Wedgebury." As its name indicates, it has a Saxon basis and history, being called after the old Saxon Jove, *Woden*. Here the illustrious princess Ethelfleda, daughter of King Alfred, built a strong castle in 916, on the site of the present parish church, though the proof of its erection is perhaps more legendary than lapidary, as no traces of its existence remain. The Doomsday Book describes the village in 1085 as containing three hides of land, one servant, sixteen villains, and eleven borderers, the latter perhaps being what are called in America "squatters." Another item shows the average condition of the country at the time: "There is a mill of two shillings rent, and one acre of meadow; also a wood two miles in length and one in breadth."

It may show the value of such estates in later times to quote another figure. The annual value of the whole manor in 1502 was under £14. There was a church in King John's day, which was rebuilt and highly decorated about twenty years before America was discovered. A century or two later the vicar was paid "in kind," the levy in eggs being recorded thus:

> "For an hen two and a cock three;
> For a duck two and a drake three.
> Pro Hosto and Fumo 2*d.*, which the minister gives to the clarke for his attendance of him."

Wednesbury has contributed its contingent to the noble families of the kingdom in the Pagets, who have figured largely in English history. William, the founder, was born here, and arose from an obscure lad to executor of Henry VIII, and subsequently Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. But he brought upon himself a sad reverse and disgrace by siding with the Duke of Somerset, and was deprived of his garter and fined £6,000 for his adhesion to that nobleman's cause. Wednesbury was one of the very first localities in which coal was discovered and developed into practical use. So far back as 1315 reference to its existence is made in the records of the town. Old Leland in 1538 speaks of "the secoles of Weddesbyrie," and Camden, writing forty years

later, refers to the coal and iron mines existing in the neighbourhood, but rather doubtingly, as if he was uncertain whether they would be found to the "commodity or hindrance of the inhabitants." But the inhabitants soon solved this doubt in their favour, and Wednesbury grew up to be a prosperous and progressive community through the wealth of these minerals. About the middle of the last century, when the old British sports raged in their fury throughout the country, cock-fighting, bull, bear, and badger-baiting distinguished the town. It was in the midst of a population educated under such influences that John Wesley made his appearance as a Christian missionary in 1743. The narrative of his experience, taken from his private journal, is exceedingly rich. The people rose *en masse* and haled him before magistrates as a man who was trying to turn the world upside down. To give a religious aspect to their fanaticism, as the Ephesian craftsmen did on a similar occasion, they raised this mob-cry against him:

> "Mr. Wesley 's come to town
> To try and pull the churches down."

If he did not effect this, he accomplished something they more really feared—he pulled down many of their evil habits, and Wednesbury is now one of the most active centres of the denomination

he founded. The town has increased in population from about 5,000 in 1811 to 20,000 at the present time. The industries of the place are large and varied. The manufacture of axles, girders, wheels, iron and brass tubes for locomotive and marine boilers constitutes a great business. The works of Messrs. Lloyd, Foster, and Co., alone employ about 3,000 workpeople and pay fortnightly about £5,000 in wages. Moral and mental education has kept pace with this material progress pretty evenly, a large force of schools being kept in constant and increasing activity, and other means employed for the general enlightenment of the community.

Wednesfield is another locality bearing the name of *Woden*. Its ancient history attaches itself to one event principally—a bloody and decisive battle between one of the Saxon Edwards and the Danes, in which the latter were totally defeated, with the loss of two of their small kings and several of their nobles. A good portion of the land of the parish or manor was included in the gift of good Wulfruna to Wolverhampton Monastery; and the early inhabitants had some trouble with squatters and claimants; one of whom, by name Goodrich, "held possession of half an acre of alders valued at 8*d.* per annum." The population has quadrupled in the last forty years, and progressed

favourably in all the faculties and enjoyments of a Christian community. Their special manufactures are traps of every size and species, and locks and keys.

Bilston, it is said, takes its name from its quarries of stone, famous for sharpening bills, and for the troughs, cisterns, &c., they produced. The iron trade won one of its decisive victories here. A power stronger than Woden was here brought first into action in the development of the mineral wealth of the district. It was at the Five Hole Furnaces at Bilston that Watt first applied steam to blow the blast furnace. One travelling through the district, and seeing no water streams more rapid than the canals, must wonder how iron ore was melted before the application of this self-generating power, for such it really is, as coal underlies all the furnaces and forges of the district. The population of the town has not kept pace with the increase of other manufacturing centres, as in 1832 one-twentieth part was swept away by the cholera, and one-fourth attacked by that fearful pestilence. The town now numbers about 26,000 inhabitants. Japanned ware, including trays, caddies, &c., is a prominent manufacture.

Tipton, once called Tibbington, is another compact nucleus in the nebulæ of the Black Country parishes. I fear that the fist of one brawny

prize-fighter has given it a wider reputation than all the honest hammers it swings from year to year. "The Tipton Slasher" once had as popular a fame as the Stilton Cheese, and doubtless nine in ten of the people who pass the station on the railway are reminded of that celebrated bruiser of the prize-ring. Still the town is no worse, perhaps, for producing him, or at least has outgrown his influence and example. Cock-fighting was for many generations the favourite sport of all these communities, and the transition from shorter to taller bipeds was easy and natural. In 1744 John Wesley attempted to effect an entrance into the town with his Bible, "but finding the mob were raging up and down," he returned to Birmingham. The following year he succeeded however, and preached on Tipton Green, and, though greeted at first with a few clods, he at last obtained a hearing for such a sermon as they never listened to before, even if they had ever heard one at all. The town now contains four churches, a Baptist, and *thirteen* Methodist chapels, embracing the three divisions of that denomination. This fact proves pretty conclusively that Wesley's preaching here, in face of clods, was not in vain. The population has doubled itself since 1831, numbering at the present time nearly 30,000. It is enriched with seemingly exhaustless stores of coal, and presents a scene, especially at night,

which must greatly impress the traveller. Perhaps no other space in the district sends up into the red ocean above such undulating rivers of furnace-light. As a sample of the wealth stored away in its cellarage, a lump of coal was taken from it and exhibited in the Crystal Palace in Hyde Park in 1851, weighing six tons. It was cut in a circular shape, like a cheese, and measured six feet in height and eighteen in circumference. The whole township is planted with furnaces, forges, foundries, rolling and slitting mills, producing vast quantities of pig, bar, rod, and sheet iron. These again are largely manufactured into steam engines, boilers, chain cables, anchors, hinges, nails, screws, &c. Thus Tipton has become one of the most important centres of the district, with all the mechanical and material capital for a hopeful future.

Sedgley is a place which no one can pass by unnoticed, for it is truly set upon a hill, and claims to be the highest table land in England. Sedgley Beacon is supposed by some antiquarians to have been the site of Druidical sacrifice and worship. The parish is very large, embracing a space of 7,000 acres, and several distinct and considerable villages. It has long been distinguished for its mining and manufacturing industries; and the two occupations are frequently so blended in one family as to embrace all its working members. While the men and larger boys are employed in the

mines, the women and younger children are making nails at home. The population now is estimated to number about 35,000.

Walsall, about ten miles north of Birmingham, is one of the most important and populous towns in Staffordshire. It is a Parliamentary borough represented by one member in the House of Commons, and is a place of historical interest as well as of manufacturing enterprise and material prosperity. It came into the ownership of the great king-making Earl of Warwick, and with his other estates made him a prince of wealth in the land. He was a good specimen of the old baronial hospitality which is such a romantic element and aspect of the feudal times. There is no wonder at the size of the great porridge pot at Warwick Castle, if what is chronicled of him is true. The historians writing soon after his time affirm that he served up six oxen daily on his table besides other provisions. But in his boast of setting up and putting down kings, he was put down himself and out of life at Barnet by King Edward IV, who took also possession of his great estates, including Walsall. His countess wandered about the realm in great distress and frequent want. The town arms are the Bear and Ragged Staff which have figured so many centuries in the history of the Warwicks. Indeed the town is a historical centre, bearing the record of many interesting events.

Queen Elizabeth is said to have visited it in 1586, and in 1643 Henrietta Maria, Queen of Charles I, stayed here on her way to join the King at Edgehill. The most impressive feature is the parish church, which is mounted on a higher eminence than any other in the county. It sits upon the head of the town like a crown, and from a certain distance the houses seem to pave the steep slopes down from its base, as if they were appurtenant to the structure and made for it, instead of it for them. It has been mostly rebuilt within the last fifty years; so that it does not show the venerable, furrowed face of antiquity it once presented.

Walsall has an excellent Free Grammar School, where boys may reach the high roads of a good education more cheaply than at many institutions designed and founded to impart it without charge, but which, by certain perquisites and side items, make it expensive. The town is rather distinguished by its charities, such as alms-houses and the like. In an old history there is a tradition in reference to the Moseley Dole which is interesting enough to be true. It ran to this effect: One Thomas Moseley, a benevolent citizen, was walking the streets on Epiphany evening, when he heard a child cry for bread. The good man was so touched to the heart at this low, pining voice of want on such an anniversary that he vowed that no one in

the town should ever want bread on that evening for evermore. He was as good as his vow, and immediately settled his manor and estate at Bescot upon the corporation to maintain this dole, which was "one penny and no more on Twelfth Eve to all persons then residing in the town and borough of Walsall and in all the villages and hamlets belonging thereunto." This is the traditionary, but not the authenticated origin of this charity.

The Town Hall, recently erected, is a building that would do credit to any large city. It is a large and elegant structure, of imposing exterior aspect, and with interior arrangements and embellishments and comforts which must make the honour and duty of a Mayor, Alderman, or Councillor more attractive and worthy of ambition. There are other buildings, especially the National School, which may serve as models, and are very creditable to the taste and liberality of the townspeople.

The great distinctive industry of Walsall is saddlery and harness ware. This manufacture has doubtless been the speciality of the town for several centuries, and it may have furnished the bits and stirrups and spurs of many of the knights in the Wars of the Roses. The history of the county, already mentioned, states that at the close of the seventeenth century, the iron-works of the town were chiefly employed in

making a great variety of these articles, together with shoe and garter buckles. It is estimated that about 3,000 hands are now employed in their manufacture, and about an equal number in the making of locks. The population has increased evenly with the prosperity of the town, and now numbers nearly 50,000.

Having now noticed most of the considerable towns in the Black Country proper, and dwelt at more or less length upon their several industries and other peculiarities, it may interest many of the readers of this volume to see a tabulated *resumè* of one department of the business of the district. It would be difficult to obtain full and reliable statistics of its total production both for home and foreign markets. I believe the U. S. Consulate at Birmingham keeps the only accurate or actual record of even a portion of the wares sent abroad; but this record may serve as a basis for estimating the total amount manufactured in the district. The following tables give the total money value of exports from the district to the United States in the years 1865 and 1866, which were periods of average prosperity. Or rather, they present a total of all the invoices of such exportations certified at the U. S. Consulate at Birmingham. A considerable amount may have first gone to large sea-port towns as the stock of

merchants, and have been exported from those ports without a record at Birmingham. In the subjoined tables, although the money totals are correct, those of each of the articles enumerated are only approximately so; for many of the invoices embrace a great variety of articles under the general head of "Hardware" or "Fancy Goods," &c.; and the labour of analyzing such invoices, and resolving every article into its proper place and denomination would be almost infinite if not impossible. I am unable to say, or even to form an opinion of approximate correctness, as to the proportion of the goods manufactured in the Black Country that goes to the United States. I am not aware of any other registration in the kingdom except at our consulate that would enable one to ascertain the amount of the exportations from the district to other countries or for home consumption. It is a pity that no other registration exists. Perhaps the defect may be supplied when the manufacturers and merchants shall realize more fully the advantage of such a record. Without such statistics the material prosperity and progress of a nation can only be conjectured on the sandy foundation of fancy figures. The hay, wood, and stubble of these easy guesses and estimates are a treacherous basis for the statesman or political economist on which to rear the structure of an argument or policy.

VALUE OF EXPORTS TO THE UNITED STATES IN 1865, FROM BIRMINGHAM AND VICINITY.

| | £. | s. | d. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Twine, Netting, Fish-hooks and Tackle | 3,592 | 11 | 0 |
| Hardware, Cutlery, Steel and Iron | 247,340 | 13 | 8 |
| Pearl and other Buttons | 34,220 | 18 | 0 |
| Precious Stones | 645 | 15 | 0 |
| Watches and Watch Materials | 6,499 | 4 | 5 |
| Chemicals | 15,295 | 3 | 2 |
| Cotton Goods, Tape, Frillings, &c. | 1,610 | 6 | 5 |
| Ditto Boot Webs and Webbing | 6,204 | 18 | 6 |
| Carpeting and Rugs | 14,489 | 13 | 8 |
| Silk Goods | 24,552 | 0 | 8½ |
| Glassware and Glass | 13,307 | 2 | 11 |
| Chamois Skins | 170 | 6 | 2 |
| Music Wire and Violin Strings | 2,756 | 4 | 3 |
| Metallic Pens and Holders | 10,829 | 17 | 0 |
| Silverware and Plated Goods | 2,962 | 6 | 9 |
| Jewellery and Fancy Goods | 27,042 | 9 | 1 |
| Jet Goods and Japanned Ware | 932 | 3 | 8 |
| Papier Maché | 441 | 9 | 9 |
| Gun Materials and Guns | 14,974 | 17 | 2 |
| Saddlery | 2,667 | 5 | 7 |
| Needles | 30,605 | 17 | 5 |
| Thimbles, Hooks, and Eyes | 1,236 | 13 | 2 |
| Spectacles and Optical Goods | 2,183 | 19 | 8 |
| Pins and Hair Pins | 1,321 | 7 | 6 |
| Tin Plates | 6,638 | 10 | 7 |
| Chandeliers | 241 | 19 | 0 |
| Ackle and Nickle Goods | 5,544 | 10 | 0 |
| Bead Goods | 871 | 2 | 3 |
| R. R. Fly Signals | 380 | 11 | 3 |
| Books, Clothing, &c. | 11,517 | 1 | 2½ |
| Red Lead | 679 | 2 | 0 |
| Sundries | 50,369 | 8 | 0 |
| Total | £542,125 | 8 | 11 |

VALUE OF EXPORTS TO THE UNITED STATES IN 1866, FROM BIRMINGHAM AND VICINITY.

| | £. | s. | d. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Twine, Netting, Fish-hooks, and Tackle | 7,737 | 13 | 3½ |
| Hardware, Cutlery, Steel, and Iron | 471,559 | 8 | 7 |
| Pearl and other Buttons | 22,100 | 17 | 7½ |
| Precious Stones | 5,637 | 15 | 10½ |
| Watches and Watch Materials | 10,712 | 0 | 11½ |
| Chemicals | 25,936 | 4 | 2 |
| Cotton Goods, Tape, Braid, and Frillings | 3,493 | 18 | 7 |
| Cotton Boot Webs and Webbing | 4,897 | 13 | 8½ |
| Carpeting and Rugs | 58,573 | 18 | 8 |
| Silk Goods | 18,128 | 10 | 3 |
| Glassware and Glass | 25,424 | 13 | 1 |
| Chamois Skins | 91 | 11 | 8 |
| Music Wire and Violin Strings | 1,168 | 6 | 1 |
| Metallic Pens and Penholders | 15,392 | 1 | 7¾ |
| Silverware and Plated Goods | 7,078 | 15 | 10 |
| Jewellery and Fancy Goods | 53,325 | 12 | 0½ |
| Jet Goods and Japanned Ware | 918 | 9 | 9 |
| Chains, Hoes, Scythes, and Hooks | 64,600 | 9 | 0½ |
| Guns and Gun Materials | 59,664 | 2 | 11 |
| Saddlery | 330 | 0 | 5 |
| Needles | 54,722 | 10 | 0 |
| Thimbles, Hooks and Eyes, Scissors | 290 | 18 | 5 |
| Spectacles and Optical Goods | 2,759 | 16 | 2½ |
| Pins and Hair Pins | 423 | 4 | 0 |
| Tin Plates | 44,035 | 3 | 11½ |
| Chandeliers | 858 | 9 | 6 |
| Ackle and Nickle Goods | 19,928 | 2 | 8 |
| Bead Goods and Gimps | 1,514 | 2 | 10 |
| R. R. Fly Signals | 56 | 8 | 0 |
| Books, Clothing, &c. | 6,451 | 11 | 10 |
| Anvils, Vices, and Nails | 13,666 | 10 | 10 |
| Sundries | 61,835 | 10 | 8½ |
| Total | £1,061,515 | 17 | 2¾ |

## CHAPTER XIV.

VISIT TO A BARONIAL HALL—WILD CATTLE OF CHARTLEY—LICHFIELD; ITS CATHEDRAL AND HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS—COVENTRY; ITS HISTORY AND INDUSTRIES—KENILWORTH AND ITS ROMANTIC REPUTATION—WARWICK TOWN AND CASTLE—LEAMINGTON.

HAVING occupied so much space with walks in the semicircle embracing the Black Country, and based upon a line drawn through Birmingham from Bromsgrove to Walsall, but little room remains for a notice of those interesting towns and sceneries lying eastward of equal radius. These would supply abundant and varied material for an independent volume, but I must condense within a few pages what should occupy five hundred.

In the course of last summer I was, for the first time, one of the invited guests of an English nobleman, residing in North Staffordshire. And it being the first time, I felt myself fortunate in sharing the generous and easy hospitalities of a host who was as good a specimen of "a fine old English gentleman" as England could produce.

The large company had dispersed in several excursions about the grounds and neighbourhood when I arrived, and he alone seemed waiting within doors to receive new guests. He gave me the kindliest welcome, with his bland face still beaming with the sunlight of his benevolent heart, which he had just shed upon a little cold-water army of children who had come with their teachers from the Potteries to have a healthy, happy frolic in his great park. I regretted that I was not in time to see as well as hear him making a fatherly talk, in the Roger de Coverley style, to the gambolling flock of these boys and girls right from the smoke and smut of their district. I am sure no man could have made a more genial and pleasant speech to such children; or have spoken to their hearts more kindly with his face and eyes as well as with his voice. I was especially pleased to see in this incident a feature more admirable and beautiful than the romance of feudal hospitality which has been made so much of in the literature of novels. The hundreds of little folks assembled in this park were not to the manor born; they were not children of the baron's retainers, or of his tenants. They were all the children of working men entirely unknown to him, and living perhaps twenty miles away. He had not a village or town interest in them, or any local motive or relationship to gratify or discharge

in his treatment of them. They were merely "somebody's children"—the children of humble artisans of a distant town; but he opened his park to them with as kind a welcome as if he had stood godfather to every mother's son of them all, in his own parish church. Now this is a fact and feature of the times very pleasant to dwell upon. Here are private parks and gardens kept in the highest state of beauty and perfection, at immense expense, by wealthy noblemen, opened as pic nic and play-grounds for the multitudes that toil in the mines and redden the heavens of the district by night with their fiery industries. While the spaces between these villages grow narrower and blacker; and while the chimneys thicken, and their swart dew falls faster on roof, road, and walk, here are breathing-grounds held in reserve for their recreation, and kept smokeless, free, and open for their enjoyment. Surely the nobility and gentry of these manufacturing districts, by imitating these generous examples, have it in their power, as many of them have it in their will, to attach the working classes to them by stronger ties than ever bound the peasantry of the feudal times to the lords of the soil.

Immediately on my arrival the Earl took me a walk of two or three miles all around the park, which was of great extent and most pleasantly variegated in surface and wooded very pictu-

resquely, but still as if Nature herself had planted all the trees at her own sweet will. There were groves with openings, like tubes of her telescope, directed towards the beautiful landscapes that stretched far outward and softened into the mist of blue and gold under the horizon on every side. As far as the eye could see, the space was filled with baronial parks with no visible roads or boundary lines between them. This truly was the Green Country of Staffordshire; still it is possible that it would not have been so green and beautiful, and peaceful and quiet, were it not for the fire, smoke, sweat, and thunder of the Black Country of the county.

The next day the company made themselves up into different parties, for different rides and walks about the park and neighbourhood. I had the pleasure of making one of the company which the Earl took in his carriage to visit some of the parks and other interesting localities a few miles distant, the most unique and interesting of which was Chartley, the seat of the Ferrers family. Here I saw the greatest contrast that I ever witnessed in England—Nature in linsey-woolsey petticoat and Nature in her court-dress. Our drive was between parks and plantations and grounds of high cultivation until we came to the wildest, boggiest, roughest stretch of land you could think possible to exist in the heart of a

civilized country. One might well fear to wander deep into it, for it seemed endless and pathless, and fitted only for the lair of wild beasts. And then there were wild beasts in it, which had perpetuated their race from pre-historic times. They were the genuine wild cattle of the old British breed, a kind of white buffaloes which, doubtless, in their day and generation, had supplied the Druids with raw beef-steaks. They were in a word just such looking animals as you would expect to find on such pasturage: and I am not sure that it would not in the end turn civilized cows into like barbarism in a few generations. They are quite untameable, and spurn the advances of human interest. Their keepers must keep at a respectful distance from their long horns; for they still, with all their wildness and independence, are glad of a little human help and attention. But the touch of the human hand is utter abomination to them. They prefer death to such a familiarity. We were told that they often drop their calves far out in the cold, stormy wilderness. The little things would frequently perish if not brought to shelter; but their mothers would abandon them for ever if the keeper touched them with his hand. So, to avoid giving them this unpardonable offence, a couple of men run two fork-handles under the calf, and, one behind and the other before, carry

it carefully to the shed. Two bullocks of this wild breed were being kept up in a yard, to be slaughtered for a barbecue when the young lord of the estate came of age. At our request the keeper, with a club in his hand, turned them out into the adjoining paddock, so that we could have a full view of them. They sauntered about naturally and did not appear any fiercer than tigers, whose eyes look as mild sometimes as those of purring cats. But one of them seemed to sidle up towards the keeper as if to catch him off his guard, and we all felt inclined to shorten the interview lest it should end in a disagreeable incident. Almost on the opposite side of the road we had visited a farmer's establishment, where we saw a large family of the same genus of animals in the highest state of moral and physical culture, both as to form, dress, disposition, and deportment. Here were thirty-two cows, graded shorthorns, drawn up in two parallel lines facing each other in a large milking shed. Here they stood, with their large, honest eyes so full of peace and contentment that it was good to look at them. The white streams were pattering against the inner sides of the pails all up and down the lines, and the good, kind-spirited creatures seemed happy in making such music for their master's ears. The contrast was very striking. Here were wild Indian squaws on one side, and gentle, graceful

queenly ladies on the other, all of the same general race, but so widely sundered by cultivation.

Returning from this excursion, we stopped at a little village church, which, with its surroundings, was the very beau-ideal that you are looking for in a country drive or walk. Here was a winding street of one-story houses thatched with straw, each with a long, narrow yard in front, full of the simple flowers of the poor, cheaply grown, hardy and ruddy-cheeked, like the poor man's children in healthy air. Opposite the church was the village inn, one-story, thatched, neat, comfortable and quiet; looking, for all the world, as if it sold more milk than beer. The carriage with the guests was standing with the liveried driver and footman on the opposite side of the road by the church, while the Earl went to the inn for a glass of milk for the ladies. It was a pleasant sight to see his tall, venerable form emerging from the low door which he had to stoop on entering. The setting sun was flooding the hamlet with its blandest illumination, which, tinted by the sunflowers and hollyhocks of the nearest cottage yards, blended with the benevolent radiance of his countenance, and made him a living picture which Correggio would have delighted to copy. In this little quiet church, which one might almost take for the crickets' cathedral, are the monuments of men who have won great names in English history. Here lies entombed the

father of that Earl of Essex whom Elizabeth delighted to honour until she found a more attractive favourite.

I spent a couple of days at this nobleman's seat, and met several men of high distinction. One of these was a young peer whose speeches in the House of Lords I had read with great interest and admiration for their eloquence and vigour, thinking they were the topmore rounds of the ladder by which he was ascending to one of the highest places in the government of the nation. Among the ladies was one whose name is known and honoured to the furthest colony and corner of the British empire as the queen of benevolence, whose means are only exceeded by her disposition to do good.

Lichfield is the clasp-jewel of the gold-and-green embroidered zone of the Black Country. Its cathedral is an edifice of which a whole nation might be proud, if possessing no other monument of beautiful architecture. The century-plant, that puts forth its white blossom only at the end of a hundred years, has its special reputation and place in the floral kingdom. This Staffordshire cathedral is a millenium plant, which has unfolded the exquisite petals and leaves of its great and beautiful blossom of architecture at the end of ten centuries of steady growing. Tradition claims it to have been planted by King Oswy, twelve hundred years

ago, on soil watered by the blood of Christian martyrs under Diocletian. The city takes its name from this tradition, which signifies, *Aceldama*, or *Field of Corses*. It would have been a good and thoughtful act on the part of past generations if they had preserved for us at least one completely Saxon cathedral of the earliest structure in England; for instance, one like that built here by King Oswy in the middle of the seventh century. Doubtless it was as large as a modern one-story chapel, with wattle walls and thatched roof. That was the germ of this magnificent fabric. It grew slowly in the ice-storms and wild tempests of those Saxon centuries. The village planted around it was very small and grew slowly and feebly. Even as late as towards the close of the eleventh century, the little church was so small and mean in structure and accommodation that the bishop transferred the see to Chester, and his successor carried it to Coventry. But Bishop Clinton, about fifty years later, brought it back to Lichfield, and began, on the site of the old Saxon building, the present edifice. He seems to have been the first architectural Solomon that put hand to the work with some of Solomon's eye to beauty and grandeur. For ten times the length of time occupied in erecting the famous Jewish Temple has this of Christian worship been in building. And, on studying all the features of its exterior

and interior symmetries, one might well feel that four hundred years were not too long a period for producing the fabric to its present perfection. If such a building could be erected in a century, to the finest and last line of the sculptor's chisel, even an amateur of architecture might walk up and down under its lofty arches and roofage with but a forced sentiment of veneration. But the rime of age and history, which six hundred years have breathed upon its gray forests of columns, pillars, and carved work, produces upon a thoughtful mind an impression which no artistic architecture, however grand, can create without such associations.

Lichfield looks like a little city of steeples on approaching it in any direction. The tall spire of one of the churches, nearly half a mile from the cathedral, seems to arise from one of the towers of the great edifice, making four of graceful proportions that stand up in the heavens like the spangled minarets of a county's crown. Indeed, not until you are within the city itself do you find this fourth spire detached and standing on its own church tower. Near the cathedral on the city side there is a long, wide pool of water, almost a little lake, which serves as a mirror in which you see the three spires and the upper part of the grand edifice photographed as large and true as life. But, unhappily for the picture and the fancy,

there is a row of plain brick houses between you and the cathedral, and these too are looking at their homely faces in the water; and as their red walls reach up half-way to the eaves of the magnificent structure, the latter looks like a queen standing in full court robes at a mirror with a dumpy country milkmaid in a red woollen petticoat just before, blending her peasant form and dress in the same reflection.

This cathedral perhaps suffered more than any other in England during the Civil War; and mostly for the reason that it was more strongly fortified. One of its Bishops, Langton, had surrounded it with a strong wall and a foss, giving it the attitude of an embattled castle as well as a Christian church—a strength which proved its weakness and half destruction. Being found in the armour of carnal warriors, they put it on for the battle, and church and all suffered sadly as the result. The cathedral was garrisoned like a castle for King Charles I, and was taken and retaken, battered and rebattered by the contending forces. It shows one of the horrible features of a civil war that both Royalists and Parliamentarians could have the heart to point their cannon at such an edifice. In the course of one bombardment, the great central spire, the apex of the splendid triangle, was shorn off close to the roof. The Puritans come in for severe condemnation for their

conduct toward all that was then held so sacred, and all the defacing of sculpture,' the mutilating of marble noses, and the destruction of carved images are generally laid to their charge. They doubtless did have a religious repugnance to all graven images, even of good men and women, and regarded them as under the ban of the second commandment of the Decalogue. It is quite possible that they have been made to bear many of the sins of the Cavaliers and Royalists in this respect. Between the two Lichfield Cathedral was left a splendid ruin. It had verified in its experience the truth of the declaration, "They that take the sword shall perish by the sword." Its wall and foss, instead of protection, brought great desolation upon it. But these were speedily repaired, after the Restoration, under Bishop Hacket; who not only gave munificently from his private means, but induced the nobility, gentry, and clergy of the diocese to follow his example.

During the Civil War the stained glass in the windows of the cathedral was totally destroyed, either out of wantonness or for the lead mouldings in which it was encased. This was a sad calamity to the eyes and hearts of all devout mediævalists. What was to be done? to sew new bits of cassimere into the rents of the venerable robe? to put young, bran new eyes into the eye-sockets five centuries old, to stare in the face of such solemn and august

antiquities? The idea was repugnant, almost profane, to all true lovers of the Gothic order of religious worship. Happily they were not obliged to submit to this repulsive alternative. It was an ill wind of violence that had battered and broken the windows of Lichfield Cathedral; but a wind equally violent and destructive had blown upon convents and other religious houses on the Continent. There was a great amount and variety of stained glass to be found in the wreck of abbeys, of the best antiquity and imagery. Sir Brooke Boothby, travelling in Germany, visited the dissolved Abbey of Herckenrode, founded in 1182, and ornamented with the choicest specimens of the glass-staining art which the great masters of the sixteenth century could produce. He succeeded in buying up a good portion of this glass, consisting of 340 pieces, each about twenty-two inches square, besides a large quantity of tracing and fragments, at the low figure of £200, and transferred the purchase to the Dean and Chapter of the cathedral. It was a good bargain for them; as the amount purchased, estimated at the standard at which continental convent glass was afterwards sold in England, was worth £10,000. The whole expense of this beautiful glass bought by Sir Brooke Boothby, including transportation, arranging and fitting into the windows, was only £1,000. It was sufficient to fill seven of the large windows in the Lady

Choir, or Chancel, the other two being supplied by modern productions. Thus the stained windows of the old Herckenrode Abbey, that for centuries looked down upon continental monks at their worship and vibrated to their Latin chaunts, now flood all the aisles, arches, and delicate traceries of this English cathedral with the haloed smile of their eyes.

Having visited all the cathedrals of Great Britain, and studied them with all the interest of American admiration for such structures, I am inclined to believe that this exceeds all others in the quality of beauty, both in its exterior and interior structure and embellishment. After Hawthorne's exquisite description of it in "Our Old Home," it would be presumption in me to attempt another. But, as this volume may be read by some who have not seen his, I will dwell a little longer upon two or three features of the edifice. It illustrates, more fully than any other that I know, the power and almost immeasurable capacity of the *voluntary* principle in England. Let any intelligent person see what that principle has produced here, and then compare the result with the production of the same principle in the Cologne Cathedral, and he will be deeply impressed by the contrast. He will see what a community educated in benevolence can accomplish by their voluntary contributions. Here they have produced and beautified a magnifi-

cent fabric, and filled it with treasures of exquisite art. The cathedral at Cologne belongs not only to Prussia but the whole of Germany. The very founder and first Emperor, Charlemagne, was entombed in it. No other building is the centre and attraction of so many German associations. For nearly a thousand years it has been rising under the thin, trickling streams of German contributions. But the builders, with these small means, have hardly been able to outstrip the slow feet of time and to fill its deforming footsteps. While working at one end of the cathedral the other is falling to ruin. Time seems to be chasing them from one end to the other, defacing their work as they creep on with the slow centuries. But look at Lichfield Cathedral. Two hundred years ago it was almost a ruin—its windows and roofage broken, its central spire battered down, and its carved work defaced and mangled. A sentiment stronger than even patriotism, an association more enduring than ever attached to a great emperor, has rebuilt the desolated edifice, and beautified it with trophies and treasures of art which Solomon's sculptors and workers in iron, brass, and wood could not produce for his Temple. The people of the district have been made willing in the power of this sentiment. The wealth of their contributions, if they could be reduced to the low standard of a money value, would show how they prize this great heirloom of

past generations. In renovating and embellishing, the blending of the ages has been accomplished very happily. One has been softened into the other delicately, making almost a seamless whole of beauty. Even the latest additions of iron lace-work harmonize with carvings in wood and stone centuries old. Two of these are really master-pieces of artistic design and mechanical skill. The screen which divides the choir from the nave was wrought by Mr. Skidmore, of Coventry. It resembles a thin hedge of tressed blackberry tendrils, leafed to the life, interspersed with seed-vessels of the wild rose and currant, and strawberry blossoms, so natural and graceful that one might fancy that they could almost breathe forth the odour of green life upon the music of the choir. The arched gate-way of this hedge of metal shrubbery is an exquisite work of art. Sixteen shining angels, back to back, stand among the topmost boughs and blossoms of this floral wall, eight facing the singers in the choir and eight the congregation in the nave. They form an angelic band of singers, surpliced in gold, keeping time with harp and voice apparently with the human choristers in white robes below and the voices of all the worshippers of the great assembly. This idea is wrought out to all the perfection that art could give it.

The pulpit has no equal in England of the same

species of work. It is a gem well set. It is entirely of metal, but is so perfectly constructed and placed that you notice no sharp contrast between it and the carver's work in stone and wood around and above. It looks like a great blossom of all the shining metals, lifting up its self-wreathed cup on four twisted stems of polished brass. "This goblet wrought with curious art" from base to brim, is as richly embossed and ornamented as any drinking cup in the old King of Hanover's collection. Interspersed with rosettes of brilliant metal are set large coloured stones and enamels. And the whole of this artistic structure presents a softened aspect, so that, at a little distance, no sense of iron, or hard incongruity of substance, affects your impression in taking the great whole of nave, transept, choir, column, and carved work into one view.

But the master-piece of all these modern embellishments is the reredos, or altar-back. I am inclined to think this is Gilbert Scott's *chef d'œuvre*, which he will never surpass, even with this work as a base of suggestion. In the first place, the body of the reredos is of the purest alabaster, taken from the Tutbury quarry in the same county. Into this delicate ground are wrought all kinds of precious stones, such as the lapis lazuli, cornelian, and malachite. The whole surface is most elaborately inlaid with

variously coloured marbles; one of which called the "Duke's Red," contributed by the Duke of Devonshire from his estate, is pre-eminently brilliant. The back side of the reredos presents a more softened aspect, but one full of exquisite features. It is a great diaper, or crinkled veil of creamy or unpolished alabaster, carved and inlaid with no less than 2,000 small pieces of marble. The central portion of this beautiful structure, exclusive of the wings, cost about £1,000, which was raised by subscription among ladies specially interested in the cathedral. If the entire edifice were a six-century plant, possessing within itself the faculty of germination, it could not have put forth a more natural and beautiful effloresence than this alabaster flower so petaled and polished.

The carved woodwork of the throne, stalls, and sub-stalls, harmonizes well with all the other modern ornamentations, and presents specimens of the art which excite admiration. The pavements are equally artistic and full of symbolic history of the cathedral, and scripture pieces happily executed. The choir was paved originally with a singular material, or with a mosaic of cannel coal and alabaster.

The statuary and monuments here have long been noted for their surpassing excellence. I believe that Chantrey's "Sleeping Children" are regarded as his master-piece of sculpture. Thou-

sands have visited the cathedral chiefly to see this work of art, and many prose and poetical descriptions have been given of it. It still holds its reputation, though so many new masters have surpassed the old in conception and execution. They represent two infant daughters of Rev. Wm. Robinson, one of the prebendaries. Sleeping life could not be made more natural. They lie in each other's arms on a low mattress of marble, just like one which a mother might lay by the fireplace for a pair of twin toddlings tired with a Christmas frolic. The very pallet in which their young cheeks are half buried looks as if you might blow up wrinkles in it with your breath. I should not wonder if, now and then, a tender mother approaching them, has softened her step unconsciously as if loth to wake them up out of such sweet repose, for they look tired, not dead. Whoever appreciates fully the genius of the sculptor to breathe speaking life into cold marble, and give it the visible pulse of thought and feeling, should see and study this work of Chantrey, if he has not done so already. Bishop Ryder stands like a living man with lips just still, after a sermon on "God is Love." The statue is Chantrey's very last, and he had in the large-hearted and munificently-benevolent bishop an excellent subject for his chisel. He was only 59 years old when he died; yet he had filled the episcopal chair more

than twenty years. Among the monuments to persons who made for themselves more than a local reputation, is Lady Mary Wortley Montague's, bearing for an inscription a testimony to the value of her introduction of the art of inoculating the small-pox from Turkey. "Convinced of its efficacy she first tried it with success on her own children and then recommended the practice of it to her fellow-citizens. Thus, by her example and advice, we have softened the virulence and escaped the danger of this malignant disease." Garrick has a monument here, erected by his wife, including in the inscription the sentiment of Johnson: "His death eclipsed the gaiety of nations, and impoverished the public stock of harmless pleasures." The monumental statuary of nobility, gentry, clergy, and notabilities is generally of a high order of sculpture, and of great variety of design. Some of the Latin inscriptions are worth translating entire both for the history they contain and for unique, piquant expression. Eliza Rhodes, eldest daughter of John Hutchinson, one of the dignitaries of the cathedral, after stating that her father died at the age of 94 in 1704, asks, "Do you wish to know more, what good he did? Let this church say, let this chapter-house and all the choir say; go thou and find the like." Bishop Hacket, who restored the cathedral after the Civil War, lies in life-size effigy upon a lofty table monument,

bearing a long inscription in which his good works are put forth very expressively. It then says: "Let us stop, therefore; it repays delay to know who lies here by Langton's side. Hacket alone is worthy to trouble Langton's ashes, by whose pious liberality they were kept from freezing. There lies the founder, here the restorer of Lichfield Cathedral."

It is left us only to conjecture why the founders of English cathedrals and abbeys built them on such low grounds. One would naturally think that they would have chosen commanding eminences for the erection of these magnificent temples of worship; that they would have accepted some of the everlasting hills as foundations furnished by nature for structures which should rival them in strength and duration. These noble monuments of all the Christian ages of England would have made splendid crowns of glory on such a setting. But all but two or three are built on the level of meadow brooks. Lincoln and Durham stand on grand pedestals of nature, worthy the superstructure. But Salisbury, Peterborough, Winchester, Lichfield and others arise from humble levels. The nave of grand old Salisbury is sometimes flooded at the rising of the little river near it. If the monks and other ecclesiastics lived more on fish than their successors of the present day, surely they would not have erected their great religious

edifices on the low banks of the streams merely to save them ten minutes' walk with their hooks and nets. Nor could it be said that there was any necessity for hiding their abbeys and cathedrals for fear of any violence from the populations of the districts; for not only the whole civil power of the realm was in their hands, but they were regarded as half-divine beings by the peasantry and higher ranks.

But structures of wider reputation than the cathedral have been founded and erected in Lichfield. It has given physical or intellectual birth to men of a stature of mind that has overlooked the tallest of the three cathedral spires, and cast a luminous shadow over two hemispheres. Can any other town so small in England boast, like this flat-footed little city, of giving birth, first shaping, or residence to four such men as Johnson, Addison, Garrick, and Ashmole? Samuel Johnson!—a nation that could build fifty cathedrals in ten years would need a century for building such another man as he was to the world of mind and thought. Here, as you stand by his monument in the market-place, with several of the most touching incidents of his life carved in the stone, you feel yourself standing in the disk of a living and immortal reputation—more than a reputation; more than the illuminated shadow of a great memory. It is a sensible and com-

manding presence; it is a great individuality that absorbs and covers the whole city. What a life was that, from the first baby battles of the little cripple with the rough goblins of misfortune that barred his pathway, to his glorious bringing up into that haven of triumph to which, after the tempests and storms of the wild sea of troubles he had braved, Lord Chesterfield sent out his cock-boat of insolent patronage to escort him? Who can estimate the worth to struggling genius of the sturdy wrestles of this bookseller's son with grim and glowering adversities? He left something more than "footprints on the sands of time." He left footholdings and footposts for the men wrestling with the surges of misfortune, and many a half-drowned struggler has reached the sunny shore of fame and fortune by taking hold of the skirts of his great example. Some one would do a good service to all coming generations by simply giving to them the consecutive chain of his experiences, just as they were linked to his life, and by doing it in a series of pictures or illustrations graven in stone, after the manner of his monument in the Lichfield market-place. There was his childhood's wrestle for learning, borne to school on the back of some generous and stronger school-mate. That is a picture in the stone touching to see. Then his Oxford struggle would make another. When,

like Bunyan's pilgrim, he had waded through sloughs of difficulty and despond, and had got almost within hand's reach of the wicket gate of the great goal of his hopes, Poverty, like a Giant Despair, clutched him and hurled him back from the temple of learning into the bitter vicissitudes of indigence. In his patient and baffled attempts to climb again, we find him in busy, noisy Birmingham, translating, in the din and dim of its mechanical industries, Lobo's account of Abyssinia. He lived for a time with a printer here, and gave to the public probably the first literary production that ever went to the press from the metropolis of the Black Country. How little know the masses of the great town that it ever had such a man wrestling his way in it to a fame wider than a hemisphere! Still, it must have been well known and appreciated in his day, for I have recently seen a halfpenny token bearing the image of the great writer and his name, struck in 1783, the year before his death. Here too lived a man who ought to have left a more definite history; for he was one whom Johnson held to the last in boyhood's affection, and often honoured with his company. His name was Edmund Hector, and the house in which he lived and received frequently the great man as his guest, is standing still in the Old Square. It is now a portion of the "Stork" hotel and

bears the following inscription carved in a tablet over the door:

"HERE IN THIS HOUSE
SAMUEL JOHNSON
WAS THE GUEST,
EDMUND HECTOR
WAS THE HOST.
OF THIS HOST THIS GUEST HAS WRITTEN:
'HECTOR IS LIKEWISE AN OLD FRIEND, THE ONLY
COMPANION OF MY CHILDHOOD THAT PASSED
THROUGH THE SCHOOL WITH ME; WE HAVE
ALWAYS LOVED ONE ANOTHER.'
THIS STONE, BY LEAVE OF THE OWNER OF THE HOUSE,
WILLIAM SCHOLEFIELD, ESQ., M.P., WAS PUT UP BY THE
MEMBERS OF 'OUR SHAKESPERE CLUB' OF
BIRMINGHAM. A.D. 1865."

He married Mrs. Porter in Birmingham, whose fortune of £800 enabled him to set up a school near Lichfield. That experience would make another good subject for painter or sculptor. The picture of himself and his three scholars, including little Davy Garrick, would show well with all the other painted passages of his life. How many stately tomes would we not give in exchange for the conversations between him and his illustrious pupil which decided them to go up together and try their fortunes in London? Indeed there is hardly a life ever lived in England that would present more passages of varied interest and instruction than that of Samuel Johnson. And Lichfield, to its credit, holds the dignity of his birth as the first of its crown jewels. Many

relics of his residence are preserved and treasured with a lively sense of their value; and if you will do it reverently, you may sit for a thoughtful moment in his arm-chair and handle his cane.

Although Addison was not born in Lichfield, he must have received a good deal of shaping culture of his mind there. His father, a learned, accomplished, sharp-witted man, had already attained to high distinction before he was appointed dean of Lichfield Cathedral, which was in 1683, when he was about fifty years of age. As his illustrious son Joseph entered college at Oxford in 1687, he must have resided with his father in Lichfield several years before and many after his collegiate course. At least, the little city claims him as one of her sons, perhaps mostly on the ground that his father's grave is with them unto this day. In the long Latin inscription of his father's monument in the cathedral, his own name and memory are blended in the closing sentence with a filial tribute to what he owed to his parent's qualities and example. It reads thus:

"AN HONOUR OF HIS AGE,
FROM HIM HIS ELDEST SON JOSEPH
RECEIVED HIS EXTRAORDINARY NATURAL GIFTS,
HIS PURE HABITS, HIS GOODWILL TO MEN, PIETY TO GOD,
AND EVERY OTHER BRILLIANT PATRIMONY;
WHO, WHILE HE WOULD HAVE ERECTED THIS MONUMENT
TO HIMSELF IN COMPANIONSHIP OF HIS EXCELLENT PARENT,
WAS CALLED AWAY BY SUDDEN DEATH, A.D. 1719."

Thus Addison died comparatively young, or at the age of forty-seven, when Johnson was only ten years old. He was born to fortune and fame, and the road to both was strewn with flowers. Had he passed through some of Johnson's experience, his mind perhaps would have gained in vigour if it lost somewhat in polish. Ashmole preceded Addison, and if he did not acquire a literary reputation that has endured to the present time, he founded a Museum at Oxford that bears his name, and contains the collection of curiosities he made in his life-time. Many other names of mark are associated with Lichfield, and the little city has contributed a contingent to the great English army of preachers, teachers, and writers of which it may well be proud.

Coventry is a town which no American can pass by without special notice, whether he travel on the turnpike road of English history, or on the clattering metal of the modern railway. On both routes it stands a conspicuous object, claiming respect and study. On the whole, there is no provincial city or town in England that is so vividly individualized by historical incidents and associations. Its very name emanates from these. It was a city of convents, probably of three at least, existing at different times; from which circumstance it may have been first called *Conventria*. Then the most popular, attractive legend attaching to any town in

the kingdom decorates and diadems this like a crown-jewel of the first water of romantic interest. Lady Godiva is the patron saint of the city—a Saxon saint, draped in pendent tresses of golden hair. And the people of Coventry believe in her, and have believed in her, with a beautiful, unreasoning, natural, romantic faith that has come down, like the substance of a happy vision, through half a dozen centuries. And if you take the census of her believers and admirers in both hemispheres, you will find that nine-tenths of the English-speaking race cherish and enjoy the sentiment of her actual existence. Poets have sung of her—bards before Shakespeare was born—and the Poet Laureate of the present day, and, of the two heroines of his verse, Lady Godiva is a more tangible being than Guinevere, and will always have ten times the popular homage bestowed upon that splendid fiction in the "Mort d'Arthur." Through these many centuries gone her memory has lived, moved, and had a being more distinctive than all the English queens who have died from this to the Conquest. She has had her triumphal processions in queenly state through Coventry on the anniversary of that celebrated ride, when she "unclasped the wedded eagles of her belt," and paced her palfrey from wall to wall, "and built herself an everlasting name." Few living queens, on either side of Elizabeth's time, have been

honoured with more stately pageants than the memory of this Saxon lady, "the woman of a thousand summers back." The most splendid of them all was probably the last, which took place in June, 1866. Indeed, no city ever impressed the existence of one human being upon its own more vividly than Coventry has done that of Lady Godiva.

With such a koh-i-noor of legend to wear in its crown, Coventry might well dispense with all other historical regalia. But this is only the beginning of her wealth of fame. Shakespeare has wreathed for her another reputation of almost equal lustre, in the character of Falstaff. What reading man has ever walked her streets, or heard of them, without thinking of that doughty coward's horror at "marching through Coventry with such a jail delivery" as his awkward squad presented? These fictions of romance or of genius give the town a reputation and a place in the world's mind for which all the incontestable and proven facts of its history hardly serve as a setting. Still real, written history is full of these facts, which would stand out with considerable distinctiveness if they were not eclipsed by these more brilliant legends and fictions. Two Parliaments have been held here; the last by Henry VI, in 1458, called "Parliamentum Diabolicum," in which Richard Duke of York, and the Earls of Warwick, March,

and Salisbury were attainted. Before this, an earlier Henry, then Duke of Hereford, and the Duke of Norfolk met here "in angry parlance," to decide a quarrel by the old wager of battle. Mary Queen of Scots passed some of her prison months here in 1566. Coventry sided with Parliament in the conflict with Charles I, and would have done it even if the people of the town had already commenced making ribbons for the Court. They were chastised, like Birmingham, for this preference and participation by Charles II, who destroyed the walls of the city, which had stood since the time of Edward II. The pageants and mystery plays exhibited here have from time to time attracted sight-seers from a distance, and frequently royal spectators. The Godiva procession was instituted in 1677, and has always rivalled the London Lord Mayor's Show as an elaborate and gorgeous fantasy, and even exceeded that unique exhibition in having a female divinity as aerial looking as possible, instead of the solid corporeity of a London alderman new-blown into the blushing honours of civic dignity.

The manufactures which most distinguish Coventry are ribbon weaving, and watch and clock making. It is perhaps more especially known for the first, than for any other business. Still, the manufacture of ribbons is comparatively of recent introduction, dating back only to 1730. This trade

was well protected with the wet blanket of duties on foreign competition until 1861, when these were removed, and the ribbon makers of Coventry were brought face to face and foot to foot, on the same level, with French and other continental rivals, whose genius and ability for cheap and artistic production had been developed to superior capacity by the very pressure of necessity put upon them by the protective policy of other countries. When plants grown under glass are deprived of their artificial air and roofage and turned "out in the cold," they get at first a chill, and, for awhile, are unable to compete with plants of the same genus that have been acclimated to the open sky, dew and rain of nature. It was natural and inevitable that the ribbon trade of Coventry, when thus unroofed and turned out of the conservatory of protection, should experience a chill and check in its growth for awhile, though in the end it may become more hardy and prosperous than ever from this very exposure to the out-door climate of the world's competition and commerce. Some one has said that commerce has no conscience; and that fashion has no patriotism is a truth still more evident and universal. No trade could be subjected to more sudden and sweeping vicissitudes of taste than that of ribbons. A new pattern or style worn by one of the *ton*, or some new whim of fancy, might throw out of

sale a large stock already manufactured for the market. As the French led the way in exquisite designs and brought highly trained art and taste to their elaboration, their patterns ruled as well as created the fashions; and English ladies would give them the preference at any price to which heavy duties might raise them. The English manufacturers, who seemed to progress in improved production just in proportion to the pressure of this foreign competition, with the short-sightedness which protection engenders, petitioned Parliament in 1832 not only for customs' regulations which smugglers could not elude, but insisted upon absolute prohibition of French goods, or the kind of goods they made themselves; not French brandy, wines, and that sort of thing which, of course, they would like to get as cheap as possible. They maintained before the committee of the House that nothing short of this policy "could produce any effect on the obstinate preference of English ladies for French ribbons, or save the producers of English goods from immediate ruin." It was a complemental or constituent opinion to this determined conclusion, "that steam could never be profitably applied to the manufacture of ribbons." But the hard-hearted Parliament would neither bar the ports against French goods nor impose heavier duties upon them. So, just for lack of the "protection" demanded, the manufacturers had to go

and apply steam to the production of ribbons, introduce new improvements, and otherwise strain their wits and activities in order to compete successfully with the French. If Parliament had only been patriotic enough to pass the act of prohibition, they would have been saved from all this bothering exercise of intellect, and have gone on comfortably in the old way. Schools of Design in the large manufacturing towns, though so recently established, have already told with decisive effect upon all articles of taste, luxury, and ornamentation, bringing up the English production to a higher standard of conception and value. The free trade and free play of genius and skill have kept pace with the other great freedoms of commerce and civilization, and constitute a common stock from which all communities may draw at will.

The next in the rank of the industries of Coventry is watch-making. The proportion between them may be put in figures. In ordinary times ribbons give employment to about 10,000 hands, watches, to 2,000; but of this number there are not included 100 females; whilst in the ribbon trade the women outnumber the men by two to one. Coventry once unfortunately had virtually but one string to its bow, and suffered often and deeply in consequence. But not only has the watch trade been added or

expanded to a large business, but several other manufactures have been recently introduced, such as cotton frilling, bead-goods, and various kinds of trimming. We have already noticed some specimens of ornamental iron-work in Lichfield Cathedral produced here. Thus Coventry is in a fair way to provide itself with all those diversified strings of industry which are so necessary to the steady well-being and progress of a manufacturing town.

But Coventry seen from the railway presents as conspicuous individuality in its physical aspect, as it does from the high road of history as a municipal community. When I first caught a glimpse of it, at a few miles distance, a sudden simile came to my thoughts which did it great injustice, and gave my mind some compunction for admitting it for a moment. Lo, suggested the fancy, a fallen town still trying to cling to heaven with its three fingers! Would it not be fairer to say, responded a better thought, a Christian town trying to climb to heaven by its three fingers? Indeed, no city in England that the eye can cover, as sharpshooters say, at a glance, shows to the traveller three such church spires as tower up over Coventry. And these spires play off remarkable evolutions before his eyes as he approaches or leaves the town on the railway. At a certain distance one advances to the front and forms the

apex sentinel of an equilateral triangle. When it has reconnoitred your position for a few minutes, it falls back into the centre of the line of spires, all drawn up in the order of review. Then they change fronts, wheel, advance, and retreat as you change your point of view; so that you have a stately steeple-chase enacted before you, and you feel constrained to stop and study the principles of these tactics, and the parties that perform them. And it will pay well any intelligent traveller to stop and go up into the town, and study the relationships and individual characters of these three remarkable spires and the churches which lift them up into the sky. Nowhere else in England can you find two such churches, standing locked in arms, as The Holy Trinity and St. Michael's, of Coventry. They seem to be twins in age, and to have grown up to their grand stature by the side of their infancy's cradle. They stand in the same churchyard, wrinkled and furrowed with their long centuries. No one has undertaken to prove or say which is the oldest. A soft mist of antiquity surrounds them, and legends of the first Henrys and Edwards and of Norman nobles hover around them like tattling rooks. Trinity stands a little higher on its foundation, but St. Michael's, with its feet planted lower, lifts up a higher spire, and the two are as graceful fingers as ever twin churches raised toward heaven.

St. Michael's looks the oldest, for the court-plaster and rouge of modern renovation have not smoothed the deep wrinkles and crow-feet tracks of age in its face. The view and study of these two remarkable structures will well repay a visit to Coventry if there were no other specimens of ancient architecture and history to be seen there. But there are other buildings and associations of peculiar interest that enrich the town.

St. Mary's Hall is one of the most unique and impressive buildings in England. Indeed, I do not remember one which presents such an external aspect of age. This shows you all its years at a glance. Other buildings equally old in various towns have been faced and refaced, so that the outside walls are comparatively smooth and trim, having had all their wrinkles ironed out of them by the hand of renovation. All amateurs of antiquity owe Coventry for much enjoyment in its thus preserving such venerable buildings unaltered, with all their centuries eaten into their faces. This St. Mary's Hall is a jewel of this order; as much so as the finger-ring of a Roman knight dug up in the battle field of Cannæ. Inside and out it is covered with the hoary rime of the history of trade guilds, city councils, royal visitations, Lady Godiva's pageantry, knightly romance, and other heroics and fantasies of bygone times. On entering the massive archway through those time-proof

doors of solid English oak, you might well fancy yourself on the threshold of some old guildhall in Nuremburg or Venice. The cellarage and cooking departments show what manner of proceedings took the head and lead of all the questions discussed in the great hall above. Few abbey kitchens even could have exceeded the capacity of roasting beef or doing turtle soup, which this establishment possessed. In the grand old hall you stand face to face with over four hundred years of the town's life and history. On the dais or platform kings and queens and nobles of the realm have been crowned with all the dignities which pompous guilds could bestow. Here loyalty, clad in crimson, has knelt, and uttered with a tremulous voice its magniloquent platitudes to sovereigns who looked as gracious as if they believed it all, and dubbed the blushing kneeler a knight for his pains. The hall is seventy feet long, thirty feet broad, and thirty-four feet high; making excellent proportions for the best aspects and uses of such an apartment. The great north window over the platform or throne gallery, is the centre-piece and first object of attraction that meets the eye on entering. It is the only one that retains its original stained glass, which impresses upon you a more vivid sense of antiquity than even the time-eaten face of the outside wall. The side windows, however, had become so blind and battered by the storms of

centuries, and by ruder violence, that new glass eyes had to be put into their sockets. These were made to look as nearly like the old as the connoisseurs of Birmingham could produce them. All the old figures and emblems were reproduced with almost photographic exactness, and it was thought and hoped that the modern colours would rival the ancient in fixity as well as brilliancy of tinting. But only forty years of exposure have disclosed the difference between modern and ancient art in this respect, and already some of the names and figures inscribed begin to soften off into that mellow and confused obscurity which distinguishes some of Turner's pictures. The Black Prince was one of the royal patrons of Coventry and its guilds, and one of the shields bears his crest and motto, ICH DIEN, above, and "Cressy," beneath, with the date of the battle, "1346." It is rather remarkable that this prince of blue Norman blood should have chosen two German words for his motto; and if he did, it is equally remarkable that Prince Albert should have adopted the same, unless he could trace back his descent to that redoubtable warrior. The elephant and castle are the arms of Coventry, and these have a conspicuous place in the heraldic symbols that line the interior walls and embellish the windows. It is rather interesting to conjecture the source or suggestion of this *cognizance* of the city. It was incorporated in 1346, several centuries

before Englishmen began to travel in oriental countries or to read of elephants and castles going into battle. Perhaps some knight of the first crusade brought back the idea. 'Old Leofric and his Godiva, of course, have their place in the galaxy of worthies. In a unique and curious recess stands the old chair of state, with all its carved clusters of emblems, effigies, and allegories. Solid, shining like ebony, made of oak growing before the Conquest, it offers a seat of honour to you, on which kings and queens have sat on festal occasions. But perhaps many visiters will be most attracted to a breadth of curiously wrought tapestry thirty feet long and ten feet deep, that fills the whole space of the north end of the hall under the great stained window. It is paged off into six compartments, each with its group like the painted panels of the Rotunda in the Capitol at Washington. Its history also lies in the blue mist of legendary fiction, which makes it all the more interesting. A considerable volume of historical incident might be translated out of these illuminated pages of needle-work. Indeed, both for its architectural features, its antiquity, and internal embellishment and symbolic heraldry, no other hall in England that I have seen presents so many aspects of interest to the visiter.

Coventry does not look like a city that has sewed new patches to this old garment of antiquity.

The very streets are like the crooked seams of the ancient robe, and on them are worked fabrics that harmonize as well with these century-worn buildings as the pictures in the tapestry of St. Mary's Hall do with that edifice. These seams or winding streets, lanes, courts, and alleys twist in and out in the most interesting way, bringing you up against all sorts of unexpected angles and niches. And there is the curious image of Peeping Tom grinning out upon all the fingers of scorn that have been pointed at him for so many generations. As he looks down from an upper window of a corner house upon the main street, he wears the very face of a conscious poltroon, as an outlaw that has sinned against the best sex in the world more outrageously than any man in history. Of course a town with two such churches and a guildhall like St. Mary's would have a great variety of charities, benevolent and educational institutions. Ford's Hospital is as unique in its way as any of the same date and object to be found in England. It was founded in 1529 by William Ford, and the building must have been erected very soon afterwards, for it looks quite three hundred years old, and as if it might endure for as many centuries to come. It is a rare specimen of the architecture of its time, and will probably be preserved as such as long as it is able to stand upright. It is of the old skeleton order, or that

in which the flesh of the outer wall does not cover the bones but only fills the spaces between them. It is forty feet in front length, with two unique stories embellished with the quaint, elaborate carvings of the olden days. The upper story juts out over the lower, and projects still further three large balcony windows, that look like three great eyes, each with six pupils, staring out of the sloping roof through a pair of highly ornamented goggles. The lower story, on each side of the massive doorway, is a kind of post-and-rail fence of glass and wood, or a long window divided into nine compartments, with headings and sidings wrought with the best genius of the wood carvers in the great Henry's time. In a word, it would make an excellent subject for a painter of ancient architecture. Its founder must have been a man of eccentric ideas. His programme of benevolence was only to house in this building five men and *one* woman, allowing them only five pence apiece weekly. But as the property he left for the support of the institution increased in value, and other donations were added, it enlarged its benefactions, and there are now thirty-seven aged women recipients of the charity, seventeen of whom reside in the building. The whole receive now four shillings a week each, with a ton of coals yearly.

A workhouse sprouting up out of the extensive

remains of the old White Friars' Monastery, and absorbing them into its walls, is another interesting building for this concrete work of early and late centuries. The educational institutions rest on equally religious foundations and seem to grow favourably upon them. As the walls of one monastery were wrought into a workhouse, so the "dissolved" Hospital of St. John, with all its lands, furnished the foundation of The Free School. They yielded about £67 net revenue at the Dissolution, and £1,100 in 1862. Few schools in the country afford such help as this to young men desirous of obtaining a college education. Wealthy and benevolent men in the seventeenth century gave lands and other property to found prizes, scholarships, and fellowships at Oxford. The school-room, eighty-four feet long and twenty-four in width, is supposed to have been the church of St. John's Hospital; the very doubt proving the antiquity of the building. Bablake's Boys' School is another educational establishment founded in Elizabeth's time, and built on the site of the ancient Hospital of Bablake. It is an excellent institution, which, in all its expansion, has carried out the original design of the first founder. It lodges, feeds, clothes, and instructs about seventy boys, and puts them out as apprentices at fourteen years of age, giving each £2 for clothes, and £2 to the master to whom he is bound. There are

several other schools founded about the same time, and enlarged by the increased value of the property funded for their support and by additional donations. Truly Coventry may well have been called a city of convents, hospitals, monasteries, and other religious houses. On enlarging the Blue Coat School building the foundations of the ancient cathedral were brought to light.

In addition to all these benevolent foundations for education, another for the material comfort and well-being of the common people is a most valuable perquisite to them. It consists of 1,300 acres, lying around the city, of common land on which any poor man may pasture his cow without charge. For several hundred years this free pasturage has been held inviolate; but it is doubtful if the inheritance will be kept green for them many years longer; as the town cannot expand much further without overlapping upon this great common. If it is thus alienated from them by this necessity, it is to be hoped that its value will accrue to them in some other form equally useful.

I visited Coventry twice during the Exhibition of the Arts and Industries of the city in 1867, and saw all their silk-weaving machinery in busy occupation in a large hall, well ornamented with other productions of ingenious handicraft. It was a unique and interesting sight; for these machines

were not in miniature or small working models, to show how ribbons were made, but they were the very machines of the factory brought out and put in operation day after day, turning out fabrics for the general market as well as for curiosities. Here you saw at a glance, and in striking illustration, the long line of progression in the trade, or the improved methods introduced under the pressure of that very competition which the early manufacturers and their operatives so much deprecated. It was exceedingly interesting to see the silken threads of every shade and tint painting portraits of distinguished men, and the churches, towers, and spires of the city. This Exhibition was eminently successful in every way, attracting visiters by special trains from considerable distances, and yielding a surplus of several thousand pounds sterling over and above the expenses involved.

Few cities in England, in a word, will present to the visiter so many features of interest as Coventry. It has played its part conspicuously in the history, literature, and industry of the kingdom, and it contains several of the most impressive monuments of the architecture of the fifteenth and fourteenth centuries. The romantic lore of legends and poetical fictions has illuminated its actual history, and made it stand out with attractive features of interest.

Between Coventry and Warwick, in a green, quiet, rural district, stands Kenilworth. And Kenilworth is a castle, which absorbs into itself all of space, population, and history that belongs to the name. Not only novel readers but practical history readers at a distance, never think of anything but the castle when the name is mentioned or suggested. Still, there is a goodly, tidy, and comfortable village near the ruins worth visiting without the lion which attracts so many thousands a year to pay their homage and their admiration—to the genius of Sir Walter Scott. All the ordinary trades of a practical business community are carried on in this village; and a tall, taper chimney of a tannery, as high as any church steeple, smokes its pipe in the face of all the romantic antiquities of the place. Still, the people would probably confess that the principal source of their income is derived from their vested interest in Sir Walter Scott's "Kenilworth," not in the real castle walls. Take away that famous novel, and, with all the authenticated history that remains attached to them, not one in five of the visiters they now attract would walk around them with admiration. In fact they are more a monument to the genius of the great novelist than to the memory of Elizabeth and the Earl of Leicester. If any community ever owed a statue to the honour of a benefactor for money

value received, the Kenilworthies owe one to the celebrated Scotch writer. One might reasonably estimate that his book has been worth £10,000 a year to them for the last quarter of a century or more. There are observatories, barometer and anemometer stations around the coasts of England, where rain-falls and wind-blows, tide-risings and star-showers are registered. There are other observation-stations where the self-registering offices of human fames and reputations are kept, and where these are measured spontaneously. Go to Stratford and look at the inner walls of Shakespeare's house and the record kept there, and count the names from the four quarters of the globe written there in homage of the great bard; go to Abbotsford, and consult the day-book of that great memory; go to Olney, and see what manner and multitude of names cover and recover the little garden summer-house in which Cowper wrote, and you will have this self-registration of human genius and its appreciation. So at Kenilworth, the visiters' day-book at the hotel will show how many come from both hemispheres and all their continents to see the scene of Sir Walter Scott's romance.

I was favoured with a bright day on the sunny edge of autumn for my visit, when the very sky imparts a radiance to the ivied ruins of old castles and abbeys. Kenilworth shows its successive

ages and uses in the various departments of its structure. From the ground it occupied, one would hardly conceive it to have been a fighting castle. But when you come to look at the massive Cæsar's Tower, you will be impressed with its impregnable strength in the bow-and-arrow period of English warfare. Its lofty walls hold their frontage and perpendicular lines as true and even as if they were a last year's structure. It is seemingly composed of several towers connected by walls sixteen feet thick, perforated by window-holes which look like so many archways. It is built or faced with hewn red sandstone, and is a perfect specimen of mason-work. The Insurgent Barons stood a siege of six months against Henry III behind these strong walls, and in the reign of Edward I, Roger Mortimer, Earl of March, presided over a grand tournament beneath them. In a later century the castle passed into the hands of John o' Gaunt, who added the noble structure called the Lancaster Buildings, or banqueting hall. This must have been one of the finest specimens of architecture of his time in England, and, in ruins, presents the graceful proportions and embellishments of its structure. Under the regime of that celebrated nobleman the castle began to put a civilian dress over its coat of mail, and to echo with the music and mirth of dancing and feasting, instead of the clangour

of arms. But Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, completed the transformation into a residential palace. He not only added the wing called the Leicester Buildings, but he renovated, extended, and embellished all the old portions of the huge pile. He erected an ante-castle, or a great gate house, which is a noble structure in itself. Never did a subject build, and rebuild, and embellish on such a scale as he did to receive his sovereign. Three times Elizabeth was his guest. Her last visit was in July, 1575, and lasted seventeen days. Of the festivities and princely entertainments he prepared for her on this occasion Sir Walter Scott has written with all that natural enthusiasm and predilection with which, perhaps above all other English novelists, he dilated upon such a subject. His graphic descriptions of these scenes are so familiar to the million, that I will not venture to go behind his brilliant fictions in search of actual, historical facts of duller interest. The day of such favourites has gone by, like the beauty and glory of this once gorgeous fabric. The sun of Christian morality and civilization has risen to a purer flood of light; and such broad-faced gallantries would now be looked out of countenance in high places.

On walking around these broken walls, some seven hundred years old, and others not three centuries, one must be struck with the weak

vitality they possess compared with the religious buildings of the country, which seemingly renovate themselves into perpetual strength and beauty. Here, for example, are the Leicester Buildings, a splendid fabric, erected only so far back as 1571, and no older on its foundations than hundreds of village churches scattered over the kingdom. The best material and art and labour of the time were employed upon the structure. There are many one-story, thatched cottages in the village of Kenilworth that now make sunny homes for young children, quite as old as this superb wing of the palace castle. But here stands the latter with all its lofty pretensions in haggard ruins. It could not have been demolished by a bombardment; for in Cromwell's time it could not have had much fighting capacity. Oliver Martel smote even sacred things hip and thigh that came in his way, but it must have been like shooting chickens in a farm-yard with a breech-loader, for him to point his cannon at the ornate and helpless windows of the Leicester Buildings and John o' Gaunt's Banqueting Hall. But his soldiers did seize and possess it, and, so it is charged, laid unscrupulous hands upon its ornamental wealth, doubtless regarding it as a part of the pomps and vanities which were inconsistent with a sober and a religious people. Still, the Parliamentary Puritans were apt to save some

Babylonish garments and a wedge or two of gold in dealing destruction to these superfluous things; and they are accused of having despoiled Kenilworth of all that could be made transportable and marketable.

After the Restoration, Charles II gave the castle to Lawrence Hyde, the second son of the great Chancellor, and through his descendants it has come into the possession of the present Earl of Clarendon, who fully appreciates its value as a historical monument of interesting and romantic associations. The facing of the massive and lofty Cæsar's Tower must be nearly three centuries old, and it is wonderfully perfect. The perpendicular lines from base to battlement are as straight as if the walls were run in a mould. The eye cannot detect a deflection of a hair's-breadth; nor has time been able to eat into the smooth and even surface. I noticed, however, that "the brave old ivy green" which braids such bandages for the wounds made by time and human violence in abbeys and castles, had wound around the front of this huge tower such a thick spread that it had deadened the skin of the wall and was eating into the solid body of it like a caustic blister. There were men at work on tall ladders removing this thick green bandage, and letting the sun in upon the stone, which had not seen its light for years.

The Gate House is in excellent preservation, and is occupied by a tenant of the Earl of Clarendon. The towers are supported by old pear trees that clasp their long arms around the stone-work and hug it so tightly that you may see their impress in the wall. It is a pleasant sight, which a poet might make something of, to see them hanging their clusters of luscious fruit up and down, as if, like the idea expressed in Solomon's Song, they were staying the venerable building with apples and cheering delicacies. Indeed, for its historical associations as well as for the architectural character disclosed in its picturesque ruins, Kenilworth, perhaps, stands at the very head of all old English castles as an object of popular interest. If a self-registering apparatus could be put in operation at the gate opening to it, which would number and record the human feet, just as some instruments register the rain-drops that fall, doubtless no other castle in England would show such a census of visiters as this.

Warwick Castle! England and all who speak its language owe the successive inheritors of this great living pile of buildings more than they have ever acknowledged. For it is really the only baronial castle that has survived the destruction or decay of all the other monuments of the feudal ages of the same order. We should not know what they were in their day and generation

were it not for this. It helps our fancy to fill up the vast breaks in the walls of Kenilworth, Dudley, and Chepstow; to reconstruct their banqueting halls, their drawing-rooms, galleries, crypts, and kitchens; and to reproduce them entire in their first and fullest grandeur. By the light of Warwick we can not only rebuild and roof the broken walls of these old castles, but bring into the vista of the imagination their interior embellishments, their carved cornices and wainscoting, their luxurious furniture, tapestry, paintings, and other works of art. Thus Warwick represents to us in its living being and form of to-day the hundreds of castles that were planted over the island in the first century after the Conquest. Schamyl in his native costume and dignity could not represent better at St. Petersburgh the leaders of the Circassian race and country, than does this grand home and fortress of the Warwicks the embattled citadels of the old English knights.

Warwick Castle, the fortress of one of the stoutest and grimmest of the old English fighting knights, did not put on the armour of nature to help out its own. It did not take advantage of perpendicular rocks or river-sides like Stirling, Edinburgh, or Chepstow. At first thought one might fancy the founders of it selected the location more for fishing than fighting. And now, in

these quiet, sunny days of peace, with its venerable mane of cedar trees, it looks like a grand old lion lying down with its paw tenderly over a tired lamb. Or, it basks its broad side on the bank of the Avon, which photographs its walls and towers and turrets every bright day in the centuries. The castle is all intact and entire, with no part clean gone or going to ruin. Inside and out, from end to end, it is the harmonious growth of many ages, and registers them in distinctive illustrations. It shows what can be done by a dozen generations of wealthy men, inheriting an estate that doubles in income every half century. Here each branch of the wide-spreading family tree has hung in festooned clusters the foliage of its life, genius, and taste. Each has contributed its contingent to the magnificent whole to be handed down to a posterity which should cherish and adorn the heir-loom of illustrious ancestors, and send it down the line of the future with added wealth and beauty. With such an anchorage to moor a family name and estate to, there is no wonder that both should attach their being, life, and treasures to it with a proud ambition of perpetuity. The name holds on as everlastingly as the estate. For the poorest man on earth must have some distant relation, and the richest man's son would take the name of the twentieth cousin to inherit the title and castle of Warwick. However thin and attenuated

may be the line of blood relationship between these families, the favoured heir to this baronial rank and wealth gathers within his coronet all the memories and distinctions and even relationships of his predecessors all the way back to the Conquest. He is the heir of all of them. Saxon, Dane, and Norman converge into his *status* and blend in his being. Just glance at the succession which the present Earl of Warwick represents. Ethelfleda, daughter of Alfred the Great, built a fort here in 914. Under the Danish regime this and the town came into the ownership and rule of a nobleman by the name of Thurkil, or, as it was originally spelt, Thorkill, a name that figured in the old Icelandic sagas. He was ousted by William the Conqueror to make room for one of his followers, Henry de Newburgh, originally from Flanders judging from his name. He rebuilt or perhaps enlarged the castle which Thorkill had erected on the foundation laid for him by the Saxon lady, Ethelfleda. This Henry de Newburgh became the first Earl of Warwick. The title and estate thence descended through the families, Le Plessetis, Maudit, De Beauchamp, Nevill, Plantagenet, Dudley, Rich, and Greville, the family name of the present earl. All these noblemen added each to what he found, both to building and its adornment. And here we see most of their external and interior contributions. The

great body of the castle itself, viewed detached from its grand surrounding walls and towers, presents no very salient features. It is a long range of buildings, with a straight front on the river. It never had the imposing and varied frontage of Dudley Castle in its day, or the palace halls that flanked the great tower of Kenilworth. But in its large, straight suite of lofty apartments you have a museum of objects illustrating the tastes, habits, fashions, luxuries, and arts of all the ages and generations which those massive walls have seen. Passing from end to end you may gauge English history for seven centuries with an observing glance through these objects. Here the white-winged dove of Peace has made her nest in the rusty and battered helmet of grim-visaged War.

On entering the Great Hall one is deeply impressed with its capacious faculty of hospitable entertainment. Truly, if tables were ever spread from end to end, a regiment of guests must have sat down to the banquet. It is sixty-two feet in length, forty in breadth, and the roofage of it is lofty and done in elaborate Gothic, rich in carving and other ornament. Here are the coronets and shields of all the earls back to Henry de Newburgh, who seem to look down upon the company below through their *cognizances*, as if represented in and countenancing all the generous hospitalities their living heir is disposed to give.

The walls are wainscoted with the brave old English oak, far advanced in its seeming transformation into ebony. All you ever read in romance or veritable history about halls hung with armour of crusaders and other knightly raiders, interspersed with spoils of the chase, is here realized in full; and you see that even Sir Walter Scott has not exaggerated the fact in this respect. Conspicuous on the genealogical tree of these weapons and outfittings for war, is the helmet usually worn, says the loyal guide-book, "by the usurper Cromwell." Here, too, is the doublet in which Lord Brooke was killed at Lichfield, in 1643. Three great Gothic windows are set out in deep recesses, as if to embrace and welcome the first and last light of the day, and to soften and diffuse it, a tinted smile, over the spacious apartment and its embellishments. But if the outside world smiles inward through these great windows so graciously, their outward vision opens upon a scene of exquisite beauty, which few can be found to equal. Here a vista deploys before the view full of all the attractions that nature and art can give to a landscape. What a pier-glass is to the richest drawing-room, the gentle and classic Avon is to this variegated scenery, as a portion of it, and as a reflecting medium of all its other features. It meanders through the landscape as a limpid hem to lawn, field, grove,

garden, and forest; now flashing a silver radiance, now one of gold upon the robe it adorns, just as the sun's rays vary in their fall and flood. Right before the face and eyes of the castle, the river forms a great brooch of emerald, or a little green island, which may be taken for its coat of arms, or *cognizance*, much older and nobler than any hung up in the Great Hall. Then the soft and level river, looking half asleep, or checking its flow in the presence of these human antiquities, just below them arises and stands on its feet, showing a stature 100 feet high in a cascade that sings a kind of lullaby to the by-gone ages whose spirits haunt the castle. It was in these grounds that, in 1846, I saw for the first time a real cedar of Lebanon, and I never shall forget the impression it made upon me. Here they stood, grand and venerable, with their long low arms extended as if pronouncing "a benediction after prayer" upon the green lawn that mirrored their august entourage. Here they stood singing the same old song they sang to David on Mount Lebanon. It was a mere fancy; but I listened to the soughing murmur with the thought that they were reciting to each other some of his best psalms of praise and thanksgiving.

From the Great Hall you have a vista of state rooms on one side, and private or family rooms on the other, extending in a straight line for

333 feet. All these apartments, large and small, are adorned and enriched with specimens of high art and high labour collected by all the families that have owned and occupied the estate. In some respects, each room, if not the museum, is the mirror of its age. Armour and articles of luxurious or antique furniture divide with pictures of the same dates the admiration of the visiter. Here is the celebrated painting of Charles I, by Vandyck, for which Sir Joshua Reynolds offered to pay 500 guineas in his time. How much it would bring under the hammer to-day those who know the existing *furore* for the old masters may easily estimate. And all the old masters are here, represented each in several of the pictures that made their fame. In fact a national gallery of paintings, of creditable number and variety, might be filled from the treasures of the art exhibited in these splendid apartments. Here figure Rubens, Rembrandt, Vandyck, Salvator Rosa, Guido, Murillo, David, and other great artists of different ages, schools, and countries. Then, as the frame-work of all these pictures, you see the artistry of the chisel, or carved work in wood and stone of contemporary schools in that department. Then the garnered treasures collected by these various branches of the family, purchased in different centuries and countries, are arranged in happy taste and harmony with the

pictorial adornments. Wardrobes, cabinets, tables, and all the articles of luxurious furniture found in palaces, English or Continental, modern or ancient, are here in all their variety and curious workmanship. The "Kenilworth Buffet," a work which attracted so much admiration in the Great Exhibition of 1851, is a master-piece of design and execution. It is Kenilworth and its romantic history, with the principal acts and actors of its Elizabethan drama, carved in oak from a tree that stood a green, tall sentinel of nature at the time to witness the festive scenes. Even Elizabeth's meeting with Amy Robsart, and her interview with Leicester after the exposure of his faithlessness, are done to the life by the carver's chisel.

Two objects connected with Warwick Castle every one, young or old, who visits it, will remember perhaps most distinctively. They are the "Guy's porridge-pot" and the great marble Vase. Both are of prodigious capacity, the very Gog and Magog of all hollow-ware. The Irishman who called the donkey the father of all rabbits would call this large porridge-pot the father of all kettles. Its history cannot be got out of it by the grave and solemn thumpings that the old woman gives its massive sides. So it is ascribed to the great Guy's time and to his personal use. As ornithologists deduce the size and habits of some

prehistoric bird by a single foot-track in petrified clay, so the size, strength, and other capacities of that legendary giant are deduced from the size of this remarkable pot. The analogy might seem reasonable to many simple-minded people. Surely no man could be less than eight feet and a half high who needed such a kettle for cooking for himself and family, even if his children were nearly as large as himself. And this is the size accorded to that prehistoric hero. He was one of those amphibious beings who, like King Arthur, have lived in the misty border-land of history, half substance and half shadow, but projecting a full human outline upon the spectrum of by-gone centuries. The history of the Great Vase is more ancient and uncertain still. It is of white marble, executed in the purest Grecian order of conception and art. It is truly a mighty goblet, with two handles of intertwisted vine-branches and wreathed and crowned with the tendrils, leaves, and clusters of the vineyard. It was fished up from the bottom of a lake near Tivoli by the British ambassador then at Naples, from whom it passed into the hands of the father of the present earl, who conveyed it to England and placed it in its present position.

The high and solid walls that enclose the castle, and their great towers, impress you with the realities of the ages they represent. Erected before

gunpowder had been brought into the field of battle, they still look as if the builders anticipated its introduction and power; and they would stand a heavy battering now, old as they are, by common cannon. In a word, Warwick Castle is a structure which must grow more and more interesting from decade to decade. It is the only feudal palace left intact in England. It was ranked among the very best of them when they were all alive and strong over the land. It is associated with a name that stands among the first in the Norman aristocracy. Its location in itself is deeply interesting. Shakespeare breathed an inspiration upon the little Avon that laves its foundations, and gave to its name an immortality more vital and beautiful than the Tiber's. All these aspects and associations are becoming more and more widely appreciated; and the footfall of visiters from distant countries crossing the threshold will grow more and more frequent as the readers of English history and romance increase in both hemispheres.

But Warwick is not all castle. Far from it. It is a goodly, venerable town with a public character and history distinct from the castle. One of its streets, full a third of a mile in length, can hardly be surpassed in the country for neatness, tidy elegance, and picturesque variety and vista of architecture. Then there is a unique and happy

feature to these streets, or the two main ones that intersect each other at right angles. They run into the heart of the town through the porches or between the feet of churches, as if all who entered or issued should pass under the cloud of sanctuary influence. St. Mary's is the great, commanding edifice, and a kind of Westminster Abbey to the noble families of the castle. Most of the building is comparatively modern, and fails to impress you with the sense of venerable antiquity. The tower is a lofty, massive structure, standing on four feet, between two of which the main street passes; so that doubtless loads of hay are frequently seen going through the porch on the way to market. The church itself is a spacious building and creditable to modern architecture, but presenting nothing impressive inside or out. But the choir, which is a part of the ancient edifice, is a beautiful structure. The groined ceiling overhead is a work of wonderful art. The ornate roofage is supported by long delicate branches that seem to grow out of the graceful trunks of the stone trees planted against the side walls on either side. They are called flying ribs, but are more like long taper fingers of white marble. In the centre of the choir lie on an altar-shape monument the full length effigies of Earl Thomas Beauchamp and his second countess, both clad in the costume of their time

and rank. This is one of the very oldest of the baronial monuments, and yet, though the figures are done in plaster, they have all the enamel-looking surface and lustre of marble. The earl died at Calais in 1370, and if he really did erect this choir in his day, or provide the money and genius for its erection, he richly deserved the monument that perpetuates his name.

The Beauchamp Chapel is, however, the distinguishing feature of the church. It is a kind of Henry VII Chapel, in which the Warwick earls have costly monuments wrought to most ornate elaboration. It is a little church of itself, more capacious than several built for small villages in remote districts. It is fifty-eight feet long, twenty-five wide, and thirty-two high, and would seat a strong force of monks and other ecclesiastics assembled to pray for the peace of the dead. It may give some idea of the labour bestowed upon this mausoleum chapel to state, that it occupied twenty-one years in building, and cost about £2,500, when wheat was fivepence a bushel. The centre and subordinating monument is the one consecrated to the founder of the chapel, Richard Beauchamp, who died in Rouen in 1434. It is a remarkable work, and would at the present day be considered a rich specimen of workmanship. It is an altar-tomb of Purbeck marble, on which, as a bed, lies the full length form of the

doughty earl clad cap-a-pie in gilt armour. Everything is brass of the first quality. It must have been of the purest kind to preserve such a natural polish. The slab of solid brass laid over the marble tomb on which the figure rests, is several inches thick, bearing inscribed on its edge all the way round quite a history of the earl. Then over the form is a brass structure, consisting of long poles of the metal hooped with gilt bands, representing the hearse used at the time. It is some satisfaction that the old Norman chieftain spoke English, and that those to whom he willed his memory in special charge were not ashamed of the language of the country, rude as it was. Unlike the pretentious pedants of later times, they regarded it good enough for the epitaph of one of the greatest men of the age. In this epitaph, which makes a good sized printed page when copied from the brass, it is stated that he was "visited with longe sicknes in the castel of Roan, therinne decessed ful cristenly the last day of April, the yer of oure lord god A. MCCCCXXXIV, he being at that tyme Lieutenant gen'al and governer of the Roialme of FFraunce and of the Duchie of Normandiè"; and then it goes on to remind the reader of some geographical incidents connected with the transportation of his remains; "the whuch body with grete deliberacion and ful worshipful conduit Bi see and by lond was

broght to Warrewik." In the sides of the marble tomb supporting this brazen image and its funeral surroundings, are carved fourteen figures of lords and ladies, representing not only the Earl's children and nearest of kin, but distant posterity, who are to constitute a body guard of "weepers" for the dead. One of these is a rather remote descendant, or the famous "King-maker," who is here represented clad in a half-monkish habit, with a long face of artificial sorrow, looking as if he had just been taking a double pinch of snuff to force a little moisture from his eyes.

And here in this gorgeous chapel, even a man well read in English history will be at a loss how to conjugate the moods and tenses of this Warwick family. Indeed, ten chances to one, he will find himself at sea as to their distinctive individualities when standing by their separate or blended monuments. To begin with, there is the legendary Guy and the historic Guy, the Saxon of King Arthur's century, and the Norman who fought at Falkirk, and cut off the head of Piers Gaveston, the favourite of King Edward I, who had "called him names," such as "The Black Hound of Arden." Then we have two illustrious "Richards," easily to be confounded in one nebula of reputation. Here is the Richard that founded this chapel, and lies in solid brass on this tomb over a long posterity weeping in marble beneath.

Then there is the Richard the King-maker, who figures on such a large scale in English history and romance. Then there is that most remarkable young man, Henry de Beauchamp, son of the earl in brass, who was married at about twelve and began to reign in his father's stead at fourteen, created premier Earl of England at nineteen, made *Duke* of Warwick, crowned King of the Isle of Wight, Governor of all the Channel Islands, and succumbed and died under the Pelion-upon-Ossa of these ponderous dignities at twenty-two years of age. Then there is the stalwart earl that founded the choir, and lies there with his countess in graceful images of well-enamelled plaster. Seemingly he was the bravest of them all. He was one of the chief commanders under the Black Prince at Cressy; fought terribly at Poictiers, and afterwards in the Crusades, and was regarded a *cœur de lion* by friends and foes. Now I should like to know how many well-read men in a hundred could stand among these monuments, and say off-hand which of these celebrated chieftains was the "Great Earl of Warwick," of whom the world has heard so much.

But here against the north wall of the chapel is the monument of one of the family about whom there is no mist or mistake as to his individuality. Here is one whose memory has a more enduring monument than any other man that ever wore

his name or the Bear and Ragged Staff. Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, lies here in effigy side by side with his Countess Lætitia. It is a superb monument, full of elaborate allegory, device, emblem, and inscription, and all the beautifully carved symbols of posthumous piety, faith, and hope. At the close of the long inscription in Latin, detailing the dignities and titles worn by him in his lifetime, it is stated that "He gave up his soul to God his Saviour on the 4th day of September, in the year of salvation, 1588." This monument was put up by "His most sorrowful wife, Lætitia, through a sense of conjugal love and fidelity to the best and dearest of husbands."

Close by stands the tomb of the Earl of Leicester's brother, Ambrose, a far better man. It was also erected to his memory by "His last and wel-beloved wiefe ye Lady Anne Coventes of Warr: in further testimony of her faythfvll love towardes him." Doubtless he was more faithful to her than his brother was to one or more of his wives. In or against the south wall of the chapel is the monument of the infant and only son of the Earl of Leicester, with his small and innocent effigy dressed in the peculiar long clothes of his time. Poor little fellow! few small human beings were ever born to such titles as are recorded in the inscription assigned to his memory. It calls him "the noble Impe Robert of Dudley,

bar' of Denbigh, son of Robert Earl of Leycester," and after recounting the dignities he would have worn, states that he died at Wanstead, Essex, in 1584, "beinge the xxvith yere of the happy reigne of the most virtvoves and Godly Princis Queen Elizabethe, and in this place layed up emonge his noble avncestors, in the assured hope of generall resvrrection."

Leaving these tombs of the Warwicks, we next visited what may be called the crypt of the choir, but which perhaps in Saxon times was the place of worship. It showed its old Saxon lineage of architecture in its columns and arches, and doubtless constituted the foundation for the Norman superstructure. In side apartments or capacious vaults are deposited the remains of several of the Warwick baronial families. One of these has been walled up, after having been filled with a hundred coffins. And that belonging to the present family has already received eighteen contributions to the silent companionship of the tomb. There is one object of unique interest preserved in this crypt, which will repay a visit to the church, if you notice nothing else. It is that compulsory bath-chair used in olden times, called the Ducking Stool. No machine at Brighton or Scarborough equals this in its *douche* capacity. It is a cross between the old chariot of the early Britons and a common wheelbarrow. It has three solid

wooden wheels, one leader and two abreast at the heavy axle. It is truly a massive affair, and must have been drawn by a donkey or full-sized horse. Above the two hind wheels a kind of rocking-chair is geared into the axle beams; not a rocking-chair in the sense of ease and comfort but a kind of perpendicular trap-door of very hard wood, to which evidently the subject of the salutary discipline was bound very fast. There is a tradition kept afloat with characteristic pertinacity that the subjects of this mode of correction were always women, such as scolds and other female termagants. The more is the shame and wrong if this be true; for the discipline was equally and even better fitted for confirmed wife-beaters and drunkards. Well, when the subject, male or female, was bound fast to the back of the chair, the wooden chariot was drawn down to the river or pond, and backed into the water up to the proper depth. Then the bolt or other fastening was withdrawn, and the prisoner was "rocked in the cradle of the deep" for half a minute or so, or long enough to cool down the fiery tempers or appetites which had led to such correction. It is a unique and interesting machine, and we studied its structure and working with great curiosity. It evidently had done the town some service for several generations; for the stout wooden wheels were much worn by use.

The third building in the rank and age of interest is the Leicester Hospital. It is a unique edifice as well as institution. Hawthorne has given such a graphic description of both in "Our Old Home" that I will not undertake an extended notice of either. It is the best thing that Elizabeth's favourite ever did; and having done one of such large design and compass of benevolence, it should accrue to the credit of his memory. The buildings are as picturesque as possible. They are of the half-timbered order which all Englishmen, but few Americans, understand. For the benefit of the latter I have called it the skeleton order, or a house showing all its thigh-bones and ribs fleshless to the world. The front building is older than Leicester's day, and was once occupied as the halls of various guilds of the town. He added, by his bequests, a quadrangle of buildings with this old edifice for the front. Here twelve brethren and the master find a home of comfort, ease, and quiet meditation. The brethren are to be selected from old, infirm, or superannuated soldiers from the four towns and villages, Warwick, Kenilworth, Stratford-on-Avon, Wooton-under-Edge, and Erlingham. In default of soldiers, other subjects of the bounty are admitted from these places. Each brother is allowed £80 per annum, besides the privileges of the house. Each has a separate apartment, well aired and

lighted and comfortable; and, over and above all this, he can have his wife with him. Then there is the common kitchen, a brave place as ever a dozen old soldiers could desire to tell over to each other the strange experiences of their lives. One of the masters had bequeathed to this kitchen fraternity a copper mug which must hold at least two gallons of beer. What a curious volume of talk a short-hand reporter might take down while that huge mug was being emptied from brim to bottom! And there are men now among the brethren who can tell stories that would read well in print. We went into several of their rooms; one of which was occupied by a sharp-eyed old veteran who went out in the ship that conveyed Napoleon to St. Helena. He gave us several incidents of the passage, and gave us the posture in which the dethroned emperor used to sit in his chair on the deck. He said he showed a friendly regard to all the sailors and marines, and afterwards presented every one of them with a pair of shoes. I was struck with the sight of a familiar face in this old oak-ceiled room. There was a Connecticut clock, of the Jerome brand, looking very honestly at the old British soldier while he was recounting these experiences of his younger days. Indeed, nearly every room allotted to the brethren seemed to be furnished with one of these cheap wooden clocks, contrasting so

singularly with the walls to which they were hung and other articles of olden furniture. Everywhere the Bear and Ragged Staff meets the visiter or inmate. Then there are the scripture and other mottoes noticed so pleasantly by Hawthorne, enjoining all sorts of Christian virtues and patriotic and brotherly sentiments.

Among the relics preserved and exhibited, there was a small one at which many must linger with peculiar interest. It is a piece of embroidery on silk wrought by the fingers of Amy Robsart. A few years ago an American, by the name of Connor, of New York, on seeing this small piece of her handy-work, left half a sovereign as his contribution to a frame for it. The brethren added each a small sum, and a deep, massive frame of carved oak, from Kenilworth Castle, was obtained, as black as ebony with age. In this it is now exhibited among other relics. The chapel of the hospital is a gem in its way, both of the earliest and very latest styles of architecture and embellishment. It is built over a deep cut or vaulted passage, through which runs one of the main streets. It has recently been renovated in its interior arrangements, and makes a beautiful little sanctuary, in which the brethren assemble for prayers daily. The "living" of the Master makes him a comfortable berth of £400 a year, with a good house for his rectory, and other

perquisites. The celebrated Puritan reformer, Thomas Cartwright, was one if not the first master of the hospital, and after his several imprisonments for nonconformity, died here in 1663, and was buried in St. Mary's Church.

There are several other institutions as well as public buildings in Warwick which deserve even extended notice, but as considerable space has been given to more special and historical monuments of the town, I must pass on to other points of interest.

Leamington is a kind of Saratoga, and a resort for invalids of mild indisposition, and for wealthy and aristocratic sportsmen, and persons of leisure inclining more to the sports of society than those of the field. From time immemorial its waters were known to possess curative qualities; but their reputation and use were local for a long period. At last an intelligent shoemaker of the village, of an observant and philosophical turn of mind, became impressed with their value, and determined to make it known by the best evidence. His name was Benjamin Satchwell, and well did he turn the leaking seams of mineral waters to account. He made a record of the cures effected by them, which was better proof of their virtue than any chemist's analysis. This was published, and the notice of scientific men attracted to the subject. From that time Leamington began to

grow to its expansion and elegance as a town. Baths, pump-rooms, concert and ball rooms, and all the other institutions usually provided to make such watering-places enjoyable to persons of feeble health or fashionable proclivities, abound here in their best attractions. And where these abound, if it may be said reverently, grace or the means of grace much more abound. The town is well provided with churches of all denominations, numbering several structures that do credit to the taste and liberality of the people. It has been for many years a somewhat favourite resort for Americans, not only for its waters and society, but for the picturesque and historical district of which it is the centre. Warwickshire is one of the most highly finished counties in England, both for its scenery and associations. And there is hardly an inland town in the kingdom which embraces within the radius of a comfortable walk so many points of interest. Hawthorne seems to have cherished this impression, and the description he gives of his walks through the quiet and daisied fields to little ivy-netted churches in rural villages around Leamington, are full of the life and beauty of his best thoughts. The house he occupied in the town will doubtless be held in better memory by the inhabitants when they come to realize more clearly its worth to the world.

Stoneleigh Abbey is a place that well repays

a visit, as many American travellers and tourists have often found to their great satisfaction. I went with Capern, my usual companion in these "Walks," to see it on a delightful April day, when the spring sun shone upon it and its surroundings with its blandest beams. Kenilworth is the nearest railway station, and from that point we made our way across the intervening fields by those endless footpaths which permeate apparently the whole island, as do its branching tendons the surface of an oak leaf. After following these into green-hedged lanes, thence into broad white roads, we came out upon the park gate, and into a full-faced view of the mansion. It is a stately, large, and elegant building, of modern structure and style, such as a block of the same length taken from the Rue Rivoli in Paris, or from the terraces of the west end of London would look if transported and planted in a rural landscape. Thus it does not present those external aspects which make the old Tudor style so prominent and unique, as, for example, Aston Hall, near Birmingham, with its quadrangle of irregular towers, gables, and turrets. But doubtless what is lost in this external picturesqueness of architecture is amply compensated by that capacity of internal grandeur and embellishment which the more modern style of building possesses. The landscape of the park is truly beautiful. The most interesting feature

of it is the Avon, which intersects and embraces it. For it meanders about, now opening its arms and enfolding a little green island in front of the mansion, now dashing down in a broad cascade, a veritable *minnehàha,* or laughing water, that sends up into the wooded heights above its rollicking chatter.

We were particularly struck with the might and majesty of two or three grand old English oaks. One was truly a monarch or father of the forest. It wore a coat of mail, one of thickly woven knots from foot to crown. What a binding for that vast book of the centuries! Who shall unclasp that cover, and read the chronicles within that volume? He who does will doubtless turn over a thousand leaves, each standing for a year of Nature's registry. Having nothing else wherewith to span the circumference, we embraced the trunk, clasping it closely with our outstretched arms until the tips of our fingers met. We measured our united lengths twice and about three-fourths around the tree, making its circumference full thirty-two feet by this extemporized standard. There were other oaks green to the tips of the widest and highest branches with a foliage not their own. They presented a remarkable sight. Trees of ivy had grown up at their roots and ascended to their tops with their thick braids of netted tendrils. I never saw before ivy of such circumference and

solidity of trunk. One measured three feet round at the bottom where it began to climb. Another flattened itself against the iron-clad oak, until its spread of solid wood was full three feet broad and six inches thick. The little green leaves with which it trims all the branches and twigs of the giant oak, are so many small dogstars heralding the approach of the great tree's own foliage. Parts of the old abbey still remain—the old gateway quite entire. The stables are of modern structure and constitute a kind of half moon of buildings, enclosing a space of a full half acre. With their gate-house, and the long covered walk extending to the mansion, they almost constitute a castle of themselves. Indeed, if they were ruined to the right aspect, they would attract visiters and admiration for their architecture and elegance of finish. As Lord Leigh was at home, we did not ask permission to see the interior of the house; which, from published accounts, must be fitted up with great taste, with all the luxuries and adornments which wealth can command.

## CHAPTER XV.

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON AND SHAKESPEARE; HIS FAME, PAST AND PROSPECTIVE.

AND this is Stratford-upon-Avon? Is there another town in Christendom to equal it for the centripetal attraction of one human memory? Let him who thinks he can say there is tell us where the like may be found. London is the birth-and-burial place of a large number of distinguished poets, philosophers, statesmen, and heroes. Their lives make for it a nebulous lustre. The orbits of their brilliant careers overlap upon each other, so that their individual paths of light, intersecting in their common illumination, like netted sunbeams, do not make any vivid or distinctive lines over the face or over the history of the great city. But the memory of Shakespeare covers with its disk the whole life and being and history, ancient and modern, of Stratford-upon-Avon. There is nothing seen or felt before or behind it but William Shakespeare. In no quarter of the globe, since he was laid to his last sleep

by the sunny side of the peaceful river, has the name of the little town been mentioned without suggesting and meaning him. Many a populous city is proud of the smallest segment of a great man's glory. "He was *born* here." That is a great thing to say, and they say it with exultation, showing this heirloom of honour to strangers as the richest inheritance of the town. But being born in a particular place is more a matter of accident than of personal option. No one chooses his own birthplace, and the sheer fact that he there made his *entrée* into the world, is, after all, a rather negative distinction to those who boast of it. But quiet little Stratford-upon-Avon can say far more than this. Shakespeare was not only born here, but he spent his last days and died here. Nor did he come back to his native town a broken-down old man to be nursed in the last stages of decrepitude and be buried with his fathers. He returned hither at the zenith of his intellectual manhood, to spend the Indian summer of his life in the midst of the sceneries and companionships of his boyhood. Thus no other human memory ever covered so completely with its speculum the name or history of a town, or filled it with such a vivid, vital image as Shakespeare's has done to Stratford-upon-Avon. Here,

> "Like footprints hidden by a brook
> But seen on either side,"

he has left them marks on the sunny banks, and across the soft level meadows basking in the bosom of the little river. The break is not wide between those he made in these favourite walks in his youth and the footprints of his ripe age as a permanent resident and citizen. Perhaps he and his Ann Hathaway, after his London life, delighted to make sunset strolls across the daisied fields to the cottage of her childhood and of their first love and troth.

Never before or since did a transcendent genius make so much history for the world and so little for himself as Shakespeare. Here is the quaint little house in which he was born. It has been painted, engraved, photographed, and described *ad infinitum.* You will find a hundred pictures of it scattered over Christendom where you will find one of Solomon's Temple. Undoubtedly it ranked as a capacious and comfortable dwelling in its day. It is one of the skeleton type so common to the Elizabethan age; that is, the oaken bonework of the frame is even with the brickwork of the outer walls, thus showing the fleshless ribs of the house to the outside world. The rooms are small, and very low between joints; still the one assigned by tradition as the birthplace of the great poet is large enough for the greatest of men to be born in. Its ceiling overhead and side walls, however, afford too scant tablet-space for the registry of the names of

all who have sought thus to leave their cards in homage of the illustrious memory. Their whole surface, and even the small windows, have been written and re-written over by the pilgrims to this shrine from different countries. Here are names from the extremest ends of the Anglo-Saxon world—from Newfoundland and New Zealand, and all the English-speaking countries between. The Americans have contributed a large contingent to these records of the pencil. There is something very interesting and touching, even, in the homage they bring to his name. He was the last great English poet who sung to the unbroken family of the English race. They were then all gathered around England's hearthstone, unconscious of the mighty expansion which the near future was to develop. The population of the whole island hardly equalled that of the State of New York to-day. Just below the point of diffluence, about a quarter of a century before England put forth the first rivulet from the river of her being and history to fill the fountain of a new national existence in the Western World, Shakespeare was at his culmination as a poet. We Americans meet him first when we trace back our history to its origin. He of all the old masters stands in the very doorway of "Our Old Home" to welcome us with the radiant smile of his genius. We were Americans and Milton was an Englishman when he began to

write. We hold our right and title in him by courtesy; but in "Glorious Will," by full and direct inheritance as equal coheirs of all the wealth of his memory. Whoever classifies the signatures on the walls of his birth-chamber, and in the large record book brought in to supplement the exhausted writing-space outside, will have striking proof of this American sentiment. The first *locale* in all England to our countrymen is Stratford-upon-Avon. Westminster, even, stands second in their estimation to the birth-and-burial place of this one man. At no other historical point in Europe will you find so many American names recorded as over the spot where he was cradled. This is fitting. We have already become numerically the largest constituency of his fame. Already he has more readers on our continent than on all the other continents and islands of the world; and from decade to decade, and from century to century, doubtless this preponderance will increase by the ratio of more rapid progression.

What a race of kings, princes, knights, ladies, and heroes was created by Shakespeare! If the truth could be sifted out and known, more than half the homage the regal courts of to-day get from the spontaneous sentiment of the public heart arises from the dignity with which he haloed the royal brows of his monarchs. They never knew how to talk and walk and act with the majesty

that befitted a king until he taught them. Yet, how little personal history he made for himself! Not half as many footprints of his personality can be found as his father's made at Stratford. This is a mystery that can have but one reasonable explanation. It is of no use to say that his social nature was cold or cramped; that he had not a rather large circle of personal friends, whom he first met and made in London, and who came from different parts of the country. Doubtless he wrote to these and others letters by the score. Where are they? Where is one of them? We have volumes of letters centuries older than the first he wrote brought out quite recently; but not a scrap of his handwriting turns up to reward the searching hunt of his relic-explorers. It is said that only one letter written to him has been preserved, and this is a begging one from a Richard Quiney, who wants to borrow a sum of money of the poet to keep his head above water in London. I cannot conceive to what else this dense obscurity enveloping his personal entity can be ascribed than to the fact, that the morning twilight of his fame did not dawn upon the world until he had lain in his grave a full century. In this long interval all the letters he wrote and received doubtless shared the fate of Cæsar's clay. The greengrocers and haberdashers of that period probably bought and used them for making up their parcels of butter

and mustard and articles of less dignity. All this may be well for the great reputation the world accords to him. It may be well that he left no handwriting in familiar lines, no unravelled threads of his common human nature which captious critics might follow up into the inner recesses of his daily life, and fleck the disk of his fair fame with the specks and motes they found in the search after moral discrepancies. It is a wonder that a man of such genius could have died less than two centuries and a half ago, and have left a character so completely shut in and barred against "the peering littlenesses" of speering, yellow-eyed curiosity. A soft, still blue, of a hundred years deep, surrounds his personal being. Through this mild cerulean haze it shows itself fair and round. Well is it for him, perhaps, that we of to-day cannot get nearer to him than the gentle horizon of this intervening century. It is a seamless mantle that Providence has wrapped around the stature of his life, in which no envious Casca can ever make a rent to get at the frailties or small actions of a great master. No man ever lived more hermetically in his writings than Shakespeare. His personal being is as completely shut up and embodied in them as Homer's is in his grand epics. Will the life that breathes in them prove immortal? Three centuries are not immortality. Will the sexcentenary anniversary of his birth be celebrated after

the fashion of 1864? Through all the changes in taste and moral and intellectual perception that may arise in that or a shorter interval, will his genius and his works be held at our estimate? Was he as a poet just what Rubens was as a painter, and will the pen of the one and the pencil of the other be put on the same footing and have the same chance for the admiration of future generations? No one can reason out the extreme ends of these parallels, or predict the verdict of another century with regard to these men. But the fact we have already cited will serve as the basis of a reasonable belief in this matter. It must have been a full hundred years after Shakespeare was laid down to his last sleep in the chancel of the church in which he was baptized, before he began to have a popular reputation, or a reading by even the educated classes in England. At the end of the second century that reputation had spread itself over the whole civilized world. From 1623 to 1823 no writers had arisen to eclipse or supersede his genius. In this wide interval hundreds of authors, widely read in their day, went down to oblivion, some to obloquy. They could not live on the sea of public opinion. Now we are in the middle of the third century of his fame. How does it rank at this moment in the estimation of the world? With all the new and brilliant literature that has flooded Christendom within the

last fifty years, has the brightness of his paled in the contrast? Has it already gone down into the gorgeous tombs of the Capulets, or to live only in monumental bookbindery with the bygone English classics; to make a show of elegant gilt-backed volumes in fashionable bookcases as "standard works," or works for ever to stand on their lower ends in serried and even ranks, to be seen and not read? Further from it than ever before. No such lame and impotent conclusion can be predicted from the present appreciation of his writings. The opening years of this very decade mark a new era in their estimation. Virtually for the first time he is being introduced to a new world of readers, to the labouring masses of the people. Publishers are taking him into the cottages of the million, and bespeaking a hearty and pleasant welcome to his "Hamlet," "Othello," and all the other creations of his genius. Popular editions of Shakespeare are the order of the day. For the first time the common people begin to know him. Such is the promise of 1867. What is being done in England and America to familiarize the masses with his writings is repeated on a smaller scale on the Continent of Europe. Cheap editions in German and French have been put recently in circulation. Doubtless within a half century he will be read in every other language in Christendom. His works never

had more vitality than at the present moment, nor such a wide breathing space among men.

While looking at the dark and dense network of names written upon the walls and windows of the room in which Shakespeare was born, there was one I would have walked a hundred miles to see. It was not Lucien Bonaparte's, nor Sir Walter Scott's, nor Burns's, nor Washington Irving's. It was the name of the man who first pencilled one upon the virgin plaster over the cradle-place of the poet. It would be exceedingly interesting to know who he was, when he did it, and what moved him to this act of homage. What a procession of names his headed! The whole space is covered with layers of them, several deep. If they could all be brought to light, every square inch would reveal fifty at least. The house and garden are in good repair. The latter is beautifully laid out and kept, and is marked by this interesting characteristic: all the flowers that Shakespeare has celebrated in his plays are here planted, watched, and tended with the nicest care. As a reward for the dew and light his genius shed over them two centuries and a half ago, their sweet eyes keep vigils over his birthplace and perfume it with their morning breath.

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